

Tuesday December 31 1996

Abu Dhabi D 9.50
Amman J 2.00
Athens G 2.50
Auckland NZ 2.00
Baghdad I 1.50
Beijing C 2.00
Belfast N 1.50
Belgrade Y 2.00
Birmingham B 2.00
Buenos Aires A 2.00
Cairo E 2.00
Cardiff W 2.00
Cebu P 1.50
Chicago US 2.00
Copenhagen D 2.00
Dallas TX 2.00
Dhaka B 1.50
Doha Q 1.50
Dubai D 2.00
Edinburgh S 2.00
Frankfurt F 2.00
Geneva D 2.00
Helsinki H 2.00
Hong Kong H 2.00
Houston TX 2.00
Jakarta I 2.00
Jeddah S 2.00
Jerusalem J 2.00
London L 2.00
Los Angeles CA 2.00
Lyons F 2.00
Madrid E 2.00
Manila P 1.50
Melbourne A 2.00
Moscow M 2.00
New York NY 2.00
Oman O 1.50
Osaka J 2.00
Paris P 2.00
Perth A 2.00
Rangoon B 1.50
Rome I 2.00
San Francisco CA 2.00
Singapore S 2.00
Sydney A 2.00
Taipei T 2.00
Tel Aviv I 2.00
Tokyo J 2.00
Toronto C 2.00
Washington DC 2.00
Wellington N 2.00
Yokohama J 2.00

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Has privatisation undermined the National Grid?

Publishing: will Frances Coady triumph?

Education

Sir Paul arises and Sir Andrew rises as showbiz glitter is sprayed over New Year honours



Former Beatle Paul McCartney, knighted in a list laden with headline-grabbing potential

Outrage at German 'meddling'

Kinkel riles Tory Euro-sceptics

Ken Traynor in Bonn

THE German government yesterday described the forthcoming British general election as "a fateful decision for Europe" and demanded that whichever party wins must make up its mind about British policy towards the European Union.

his own ship before trying to sink ours."
The Conservative MEP, Graham Mathar, added that Anglo-German relations would be damaged unless Chancellor Helmut Kohl disavowed his foreign minister's comments.

currency and other crucial issues on the 1997 EU agenda.
"At the moment, it has to be realised, Great Britain is in a difficult situation politically. But that will pass," he told Der Spiegel magazine. "Nonetheless, I am optimistic. I hope Great Britain will be there when monetary union is launched."

Michael White Political Editor
THE composer Sir Andrew Lloyd Webber becomes a lord this morning and Paul McCartney, his cheerier rival in Britain's flourishing musical export market, becomes Sir Paul as part of a 1,085-name New Year's Honours list sprinkled with showbiz glitter.

and pillar of the MCC establishment, may be John Major's own nostalgic choice, as could Frankie Vaughan, the 1950s pop idol whose CBE is for youth work.

took him to the Referendum Party conference in October. "You are hurting us, Freddy. You are damaging us," Mr Major later told him.

Honour bound

Table listing names of honorees in various categories: Literature, Arts and the media, Sport, and others.

US sets up historic deal over Hebron

Israel and Palestinian negotiators said last night that a deal on the withdrawal of Israeli troops from the West Bank town of Hebron was close, after nearly nine months of bitter dispute.

yahu, and the Palestinian Authority president, Yasser Arafat, Palestinian officials said troops would leave Hebron a week after the leaders met.

hebron since March, when the former prime minister Shimon Peres suspended the withdrawal after a spate of Palestinian suicide attacks.

Palestinian officials said US and Egyptian representatives would attend the summit.

for a joint armed presence at the Tomb of the Patriarchs in the centre of Hebron, where Jews and Arabs pray.

The Guardian's Alan Rusbridger has been voted Britain's most respected editor in a Mori survey of 34 of the country's leading editors. He received 12 votes in the annual poll to choose the "editor's editor", with Paul Dacre of the Daily Mail in second place with nine votes.

Inside Britain World News Finance Sport Comment and Letters 9; Obituaries 10; Crossword 15; Weather 16; Radio 16; TV 16

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Sketch

Supermodels strut their stuff



Stuart Millar

FIVE days after Christmas and the children are already bored with their new toys...

In an atmosphere thick with pipe smoke and the smell of engine grease, earnest-looking enthusiasts contentedly tinkered with their model trains...

people. I started building little tin plate kits then gradually started making my own from plastic or metal...

Alas, young talent such as Lewis has become rare, as competition in the hobby market has expanded with the development of ever more sophisticated technology...

Around a giant racing circuit, a large noisy crowd of youngsters watched as William Mitcham powered his way into the show's championship finals in his Predator XK5 remote control car...

Now sponsored by a model car manufacturer, he spends much of the year competing in glamorous locations around the world...

Foreign Office welcomes concessions offered to lawyer appointed by Britons accused of murder

Boost for Saudi trial nurses

THE two British nurses accused of murder in Saudi Arabia appointed a prominent English-speaking lawyer yesterday but there were conflicting reports on what role he might be allowed to play in court...

In a recent murder case involving an American, a Jeddah-based lawyer was allowed to attend the court, but only in the capacity of a translator...

nurses took place in the early hours of December 19 when all three women were wearing pyjamas...



The A260 between Folkestone and Canterbury in Kent was closed yesterday due to snow and ice, which have caused treacherous conditions for drivers

Drivers warned as heavy snow predicted in the south

BRITAIN is set to welcome the new year in temperatures of around -4C in most parts of the country, with heavy snow expected in many areas, particularly in the south and east...

caused transport chaos from Moscow to the Mediterranean. The Venice lagoon has frozen over, and in the Caucasus mountains, southern Russia, avalanches have trapped up to 300 people...

est snowfall in a decade at the weekend, with 10,000 people left without electricity... Schoolboys Peter Lawlor, aged 16, and Neil Thomson, aged 17, were stranded on the mountain for 24 hours...

Review

The agony and the execrable

Stephen Moss

IT'S easy to make fun of Anne Atkins, but that shouldn't stop us. Scourge of sodomites, abortionists and woolly liberals every where, in the three months since her assault on gay Christians on Thought for the Day she has become the mouthpiece of right-thinking Middle Englishers through her dual role as Daily Telegraph agony aunt and resident moralist...

none of this can disguise the witless prose... But Flynn is the comparison that springs to mind, both for the banality of the writing and the preoccupation with middle-class meals...

Food poisoning inquiry urged

AN MP yesterday demanded an investigation into the accelerating incidence of Scottish food poisoning as controversy continued over the outbreak of E. coli infection which has killed 16 people...

McCartney and Lloyd Webber top bill in glitter honours list

continued from page 1 Chant, chief of the embattled Child Support Agency, becomes a Companion of the Bath...

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In the New Year Guardian The shape of things to come: What will 1997 hold? A Labour election victory? A black Pope? An American landing on Mars? We sum up the prospects, predict developments and identify the movers and shakers for the coming year.

Children said to play among mustard gas canisters



Unexploded bombs, mostly from the first world war, sit rusting at the dump near Vimy. A smaller arms dump at Crotoy blew up two weeks ago. PHOTOGRAPHER: ANTONIN KRATOCHVIL

Blast fear at French arms dump



Security is lax, and souvenir hunters can break in

Paul Webster in Paris reports on the row over the safety of a store of rusting, unexploded first world war ammunition

A HUGE unguarded open-air ammunition dump on the first world war battlefield around Vimy in France is at the centre of a row between military and local government officials after reports that the weapons are in danger of exploding.

More than 500 tonnes of unexploded British, French and German bombs and shells, including dozens of mustard gas canisters, are stocked in a 1,000 sq ft site protected by a wire fence and a padlocked gate. But concern over safety has increased after a much smaller weapons dump at Crotoy in the Somme blew up a fortnight ago. No one was hurt but 200 houses had to be evacuated.

The Vimy dump, established nearly 50 years ago among fields in the Pas-de-Calais, contains the biggest collection of first world war ammunition in the country, all of it recovered from battlefields in the north. Occasionally, second world war bombs are also brought in. Chemical weapons make up around a third of the ammunition.

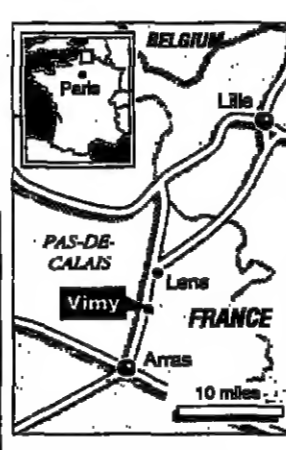
The depot was intended as a temporary holding area for the ammunition before it was taken to the Baie de Somme to be blown up under water by the army. But recently environmental organisations have opposed the method because they say it threatens one of Europe's most important bird sanctuaries.

Hundreds of shells and bombs, some weighing nearly a tonne, are stacked with military neatness, but hand grenades are kept in buckets. Because of the delay in destruction, many weapons are rusty, and gas has been seen leaking from containers.

The mayor of Vimy, Lionel Laney, said that despite concern that children use the dump as a playground and that souvenir hunters often break in, the army refuses to place a guard. The only warning of potential risk is a small wooden sign saying "danger de mort".

The Pas-de-Calais local government authority in the north. Occasionally, second world war bombs are also brought in. Chemical weapons make up around a third of the ammunition.

The depot was intended



Colonel Philippe Méchin, who heads the army's bomb squad, said the ammunition was safer at Vimy than on the roadsides or in the fields and villages from where it was recovered after years underground or in unmarked dumps.

Colony Philippe Méchin, who heads the army's bomb squad, said the ammunition was safer at Vimy than on the roadsides or in the fields and villages from where it was recovered after years underground or in unmarked dumps.

"There shouldn't be such a stock at Vimy but environmentalists and local councillors are increasingly opposed to controlled explosions," he said, adding that the army had been considering for some time a plan to set up a guarded site inside a military camp. "As Vimy is supposed to be closed down one of these days, nobody is interested in spending money on temporary protection measures."

gendarmerie said that, apart from occasional patrols, it could not keep a watch on the depot.

Experts say war pension rules unfair

David Brindle, Social Services Correspondent

Andrew Mitchell, junior social security minister, has said in a letter to Vernon Coaker, his prospective Labour opponent in his Gedling constituency, that Dr Braidwood's findings "reflect the views of experts at the Medical Research Council Institute of Hearing".

The Nottingham-based institute, which also has centres in Glasgow and Southampton, is the leading authority on deafness research. Ross Coles, its spokesman, said he and his colleagues had not been formally consulted and did not endorse the conclusions Dr Braidwood had drawn.

"We cannot find anyone who discussed it with them, as they claim, and our view is that while Dr Braidwood got most of her facts right, she has interpreted them wrongly," Dr Coles said.

He added that it was grossly unfair to apply a "low fence" threshold — and then make no allowance for further loss of hearing through ageing.

"The combine effect, he argued, was to rule out almost all claims for deafness pensions, as probably fewer than 1 per cent would pass the threshold.

"It has virtually ended compensation for military deafness," Dr Coles said. "I have seen quite a few Northern Ireland victims and few would come up to the level required; as regards the ordinary military, virtually none."

"If you look at data from the Falklands, nobody would get compensation for noise injury on the basis of the new rules."

According to confidential DSS documents, about 10,000 war veterans a year will lose claims they would have won previously.

A DSS spokeswoman said Dr Braidwood had consulted the hearing institute through its Glasgow centre. The new rules had been backdated to March 1 because that was when the medical consensus had become clear.

Researchers say changes will rule out almost all claims for deafness pensions

Under the new deafness rules, ex-service personnel will be ineligible for life for a war pension for hearing loss unless there was evidence of the damage before they left the armed forces. They will also be ineligible for any pension increase as hearing deteriorates in later life.

A previous change, in 1983, barred payment of any pension in cases of hearing loss of less than 20 per cent.

The Government claims it was obliged to bring in the new rules because medical opinion had become clear that hearing loss could not be attributed to exposure to gunfire or explosions once the individual had left the forces.

The change is said to have been based on a paper summarising medical research and opinion, prepared by Elizabeth Braidwood, a DSS medical adviser. Lord Mackay of Ardbrecknish, social security minister responsible for war pensions, says he was told there were 100 medical experts with a dissenting view.

Blair savages 'weak' Major

Labour leader promises to bring down Government in New Year

Michael White Political Editor

TONY BLAIR last night laid claim to the mantle of national leadership when he accused John Major of being too weak to manage his party, let alone the country, and promised to bring down the Government "in any way we can" in the New Year.

Next year would be "the year the Government finally has to face the people's verdict. Britain needs a general election as soon as possible to restore firm and coherent government", the Labour leader said.

As he spoke, Tory strategists put the finishing touches on their own New Year advertising campaign — "the most negative campaign so far" party sources have said — to be launched next week with the intention of undermining the steadfast qualities Mr Blair claims for his own leadership.

The Tory chairman, Brian Mawhinney, last night offered a foretaste of hand-to-hand fighting ahead as the Government struggles to stave off a vote of no confidence now that its Commons majority has disappeared. He predicted Labour would campaign on "Five Lies — five completely invented charges about what the Conservative Party will do after we are re-elected".

In contrast to the Prime Minister's soothing seasonal message to supporters, Mr Blair painted a picture of a country falling behind its rivals in skills, public services and national wealth, burdened with higher taxes, escalating crime and a costly "BSE fiasco" which demonstrated the collapse of Conservative influences in Europe.

Accusing Mr Major of feebly allowing divisions within

the Tory party to "grow and fester", Mr Blair contrasted that with his own record since 1984 as the man who had created New Labour by changing the party's constitution, doubling its membership and modernising its policy objectives.

"Voters would know that a strong country cannot be built on weak leadership. They know that a leadership so weak that it cannot run a party cannot be trusted to run the country" he declared before restating New Labour's goals: economic partnership, educational opportunity, decentralised power, a reformed welfare state and an effective EU role.

But Mr Mawhinney's tactic last night did surprise Labour election planners. In a tough statement, billed as his own New Year message to staff at party HQ, he specified which "five lies" he expects to be hit by in Labour attacks next month.

"They are: that the Tories will impose charges for visiting a GP; that VAT will be placed on food and children's clothing; that pensioners will no longer have the basic state pension upgraded in line with inflation; that water metering will become compulsory; and that there will be "more guns and knives on the streets".

All have been denied by ministers, though touted by assorted policymakers. Mr Arzoo said there had been a tactic evolved memories of the celebrated "Ten Labour Lies" campaign launched by Conservative Central Office and the Daily Mail in 1978, among them the claim that a Thatcher government would double VAT — also much denied at the time.

In the event it rose from a basic 8 per cent to 15 per cent in Lord Howe's first budget, slightly less than double, but enough to allow the ex-chancellor to call the denial more than "a semantic quibble" in his memoirs.

Last night Labour officials denied any such intention, but thanked Mr Mawhinney for publicising such plausible options. "Thanks for writing the script, we'll take it over from here," one said.

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The voltage drops. Lights dim. Suddenly electric fires are not as hot as they should be. Ten minutes later there is no alternative. Blackouts are ordered. Electric fires go out, electric blankets and kettles stay cold. And so does the population.

GB cover story

Handwritten signature or note at the bottom of the page.

4 BRITAIN Tories plan to boost opt-outs

John Carvel
Education Editor

A CONSERVATIVE manifesto promise to help parents and teachers set up a new generation of self-governing schools in competition with local education authorities is being considered by the Prime Minister.

"Charter schools" would be given basic state funding according to the number of pupils, but they would be encouraged to top this up with finance from local businesses and voluntary organisations.

Ministers think the scheme could provide an opportunity for enterprising teachers and parents in the run-down inner cities, or in villages where educational provision has been withdrawn as population declined.

The first steps towards the new model are being put in place in the Education Bill now before Parliament. It would allow the Funding Agency for Schools — the quango which supervises the self-governing sector — to pay start-up grants to the promoters of grant maintained schools and recoup them from local councils.

Gillian Shepherd, the Education and Employment Sec-

retary, said ministers were looking at how the idea could be developed, but would not elaborate. Eric Forth, her deputy, is understood to have studied a similar scheme during a recent visit to the US where 500 charter schools have been founded since 1961, many in areas which have lacked good schools.

David Blunkett, the shadow education secretary, said the plan resembled the Government's failed initiative to attract business sponsorship for city technology colleges to compete with local authority schools. "This appears to be in complete contradiction of what the Tories have been doing during 18 years of closing inner city and village schools in the name of eliminating surplus places."

"Having failed with previous attempts to divide the education system, they are now desperate to divert attention from their own failure in reducing funding for schools, worsening pupil-teacher ratios and massively increasing class sizes."

Douglas McAwoy, general secretary of the National Union of Teachers, said the proposal for businesses to support schools was "a step back into the 18th century which did not work then and it will not work now."

Trawler apprentice scheme seeks to pump new blood into life on the ocean wave



James Spark in the wheelhouse of a Whitby trawler yesterday. Below, another apprentice, Clive Hall, gets some tips on knots from his father, William

PHOTOGRAPHS: STEVE FORREST

BRITAIN'S first apprenticeship in sea fishing since the vanished heyday of Atlantic trawlers was launched yesterday, as snowflurries drifted across a heavy swell at Whitby harbour on the North Sea coast, writes Martin Watworth.

Eight teenagers began a three-year training course leading to a skipper's certificate in a project designed to counter the prevailing image of fishing as a dying trade.

"I hope to be the youngest skipper in the country," said 16-year-old James Spark, one of the successful applicants to the scheme, launched by Whitby trawlers and the Yorkshire and Humber Ports training association. The course is part-funded by North Yorkshire training and enterprise council, but the port's fleet has also invested directly.

"Our business alone has invested £1 million in boats this year, but the industry has such a negative image at the moment that we could not get new recruits," said Arnold Looker, who runs seven trawlers out of Whitby. "Captains of fishing vessels have a very different job from even 10 years ago — it's all computers and satellite navigation systems and we need really qualified people to run the boats."

James's mother, Judith Spark, said: "He got nine GCSEs, so he could have gone on to college. But he hates being shut in. He's really stuck on it — even getting his knuckles dislocated on a trial run at sea hasn't put him off at all."



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£5,000-£9,999	1.30%	£10,000-£24,999	1.30%
£10,000-£24,999	1.50%	£25,000-£49,999	1.50%
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£50,000+	1.90%		

CapitalBuilder

Net p.a.	Net p.a.
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£10,000-£24,999	4.60%
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Monthly Income

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£10,000-£24,999	3.40%
£25,000-£49,999	3.60%
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£1+	4.50%

Smart 2 Save

Net p.a.	Net p.a.
£1+	4.50%

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Business Investor	Net p.a.	Treasury Account	Net p.a.
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£5,000-£9,999	3.20%		
£10,000-£24,999	3.40%		
£25,000-£49,999	3.60%		
£50,000+	3.80%		

NEW RATES FOR ACCOUNTS NO LONGER AVAILABLE

Account Name	Balance	Gross p.a.	Net p.a.
Ames Reserve	£2,000-£4,999	3.00%	2.40%
	£5,000-£9,999	3.20%	2.72%
	£10,000-£24,999	3.40%	3.04%
	£25,000-£49,999	3.60%	3.36%
	£50,000+	3.80%	3.68%

Millennium plea by Bottomley

Gary Younge

THE National Heritage Secretary, Virginia Bottomley, yesterday invited Britons to contribute their own ideas for celebrating the millennium.

Mrs Bottomley, chairman of the Millennium Commission, called on businesses and civic organisations to come together in an attempt to ensure that the festival empowers communities and reflects the country's religious, ethnic and cultural diversity.

"The clock is now ticking — it's 36 months to go," said Mrs Bottomley, at the launch of a consultation document for the Millennium Festival.

"Many of the headlines have been focused on the exhibition at Greenwich, but the whole nation will be involved in this event. We want it to be based on people's own ideas, and we want to reflect the religious, cultural and ethnic diversity of the country," she said.

A budget of £20 million is being made available for Scotland, Wales, Northern Ireland and nine English regions to celebrate the year 2000. The

cash is in addition to £120 million pledged to the Millennium Exhibition in Greenwich, south-east London.

"We are sending out a challenge to a wide range of organisations, from charities to businesses, to work in partnership to produce a high quality programme of activity to reach the widest possible audience," Mrs Bottomley added.

The activities which the commission might encourage include those "which the public will enjoy and feel are worthwhile; will bring communities together, while reflecting religious, ethnic and cultural diversities; are both educational and entertaining, and engage as many people as possible in actively celebrating the millennium".

A spokeswoman for the Millennium Commission said: "It was always part of the plan that the events should be as inclusive as possible. Now we are getting the ball rolling with a request for initial ideas from church groups, local authorities, community centres and individuals. Ideas should be submitted to the commission by February 21.

Del Boy gathers in the TV millions

Andrew Cuff
Media Correspondent

DEL Boy and Rodney Trotter headed into the sunset at the end of Only Fools and Horses and clocked up the year's highest television audience.

The hour-long BBC Sunday night special — one of three new episodes shown over Christmas — was watched by 21.5 million, according to unofficial figures.

In the last half-hour the audience peaked at 22.1 million, more than 71 per cent of all viewers, and the end of the show brought the National Grid's biggest power surge of the year — 1,600 megawatts — as millions put the kettle on.

The Christmas Day edition was watched by 18.7 million and the second instalment on Friday attracted 18.45 million.

The previous highest audience for Only Fools and Horses' 15-year history was 20.1 million for Christmas Day episodes in 1989 and 1992.

Writer John Sullivan and stars David Jason and Nicholas Lyndhurst were persuaded by the BBC to make the swansong three-part.

It ended with Del Boy fulfilling his lifetime ambition of becoming a millionaire after ending a £5 million watch in his garage.

"We are delighted it proved a triple treat with our viewers. The whole team have left an indelible mark on the history of TV comedy."

The official viewing figures, to be released next week, will include video-recordings and could further boost the show's audience.

BBC1 beat ITV in audience

share each day from Christmas Eve until December 25, according to early estimates. On Christmas Day it achieved a 68 per cent share, compared to ITV's 25.7 and won a 42.2 to 30.5 per cent victory on Boxing Day. "One Foot in the Grave, the most popular non-soap over Christmas 1996, was watched by 18.3 million on Boxing Day.

BBC exterminates creators of Doctor Who theme tune

Andrew Cuff

THE unit which composed the theme tune for Doctor Who is one of the latest casualties of BBC cost-cutting, which will result in more than 200 job losses.

Four posts are to go at the BBC Radiophonic Workshop, which will withdraw from its role in music composition to continue its audio restoration work.

BBC Resources is axing its props department six weeks after pulling out of costume and make-up design, with the loss of more than 60 jobs. The posts include the BBC's armoury, which was able to provide programmes with firearms and advice on the choreography of fight sequences.

The first tranche of redundancies at BBC News Resources has also been confirmed with the loss of 138 posts, including studio and gallery staff.

A spokesman for BBC Resources said: "Nobody likes cutting jobs, but we cannot ask the licence fee payer to continue to subsidise loss-making activities which are available from the freelance market."

Rod Lynch, chief executive of BBC Resources, which has seen its workforce fall from 12,500 to fewer than 7,000 in three years, wants the directorate to become a wholly owned subsidiary.

share each day from Christmas Eve until December 25, according to early estimates. On Christmas Day it achieved a 68 per cent share, compared to ITV's 25.7 and won a 42.2 to 30.5 per cent victory on Boxing Day.

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HALIFAX 21st DECEMBER 1996

مكتبة من الاموال

Shadow home secretary assesses the damage resulting from 'reactionary voting' and pulls a few skeletons out of noble cupboards

Straw lays into hereditary peers

Michael White
Political Editor

Two lords attending — sometimes

JOHAN Major's vision of the classless society is underpinned by a hard core of Eton-and-Oxbridge hereditary peers whose crucial votes in the House of Lords stem from ancestors who bribed, stole, slept and betrayed their way into royal favour. Labour's Jack Straw declared yesterday.

In a fresh assault upon the hereditary aristocracy, which could — in theory — be abolished by next New Year's Day, the shadow home secretary accused backwoods peers, who rarely attend the upper house, of helping to save the Government from defeat in 66 of the 96 Lords divisions which it won in 1995/96. Ten votes were lost.

Walter Francis John Montague Douglas Scott, 9th Duke of Buccleuch (right); born 1923. Educated at Eton and Christ Church, Oxford. Owner of £400 million worth of property and land in Scotland. First title dating from 1618 when ancestor, Sir Walter Scott, "organised a campaign of terror against the English borders". Dukedom awarded in 1663. Farmer and philanthropist, voted once last year, with the Government.



George Miles Hobart-Hampden, 10th Earl of Buckinghamshire; born 1944. Educated at Clifton College and Exeter University. Descended from Sir Henry Hobart, Baronet (created 1811), aide to William of Orange at the Battle of the Boyne in 1690. Killed in a duel. Eldest son raised to peerage, 10th earl, a City businessman, voted twice in 1995/96, both times with the Government.

But in addition to detailing occasions when the votes of some 320 hereditary peers who take the Tory whip made the vital difference, Mr Straw

also got personal. Stung by the recent claim by Lord Cranborne, leader of the Lords, that amateur peers are increasingly more represen-

tative of the "common man" than professional politicians, he revealed that 228 of the 490 known Tory peers (some do not take the whip) went to

Eton. Some 163 went to Oxford or Cambridge, he said, and 23 more went to the Royal Agricultural College at Cirencester. Only three are women.

The latest assault comes as hereditary peers brace themselves for a Labour election victory, and, sooner or later, a short bill to end their voting rights. Only this week a six-point defence plan was offered by the rightwing columnist Simon Hoffer, including tightening up on attendance, extra hereditary peers in the Cabinet, and the demand that a Blair government submit its limited Lords reform package to a referendum.

Also in the Hoffer plan, published by the Centre for Policy Studies, is a "generous offer" of extra life peers to Labour before the election and a demand that Tory ministers like John Major, who defend the hereditary Lords, have the guts to create a few more of them — only two have been created since 1970. As the Tory chairman, Brian Mawhinney, moved in

to denounce the shadow home secretary for touching "new depths of negative campaigning with his highly personalised attacks", Mr Straw went further. He singled out a clutch of peers with ancestral circumstances worthy of tabloid investigation. First to be arraigned were the Hamilton ancestors of the 8th Duke of Abercorn (who voted three times last year), accused of "gaining their first Scottish peerage after Sir James Hamilton joined, then betrayed, the Douglas revolt of 1455 against the Crown. As for the Duke of Buccleuch, who voted once in 1995/96 for the Government, the wealth of Britain's largest private landowner stems from 16th century border raids against the English, fortified with a dukedom on the day one of the family "married the bastard son of Charles II" in 1663. Lord Vestey's family rise was also controversial. Mr Straw says the first baron was "reviled as little better than a traitor" after he refused to pay taxes in World War I and then paid £20,000 for his title in 1922. Behind this and other CVs produced by Mr Straw is a determination to show that backwoodsmen are "not just political satires", but helped to save Mrs Thatcher's poll tax bill and other reactionary legislation. It is a hypersensitive charge for Lord Cranborne's supporters who claim the peers routinely amend bad legislation without favour to either side. Yet the widely condemned abolition of social security benefits for asylum seekers was carried on July 22 by 182 votes to 168 only because of the votes of hereditary peers.



Paramedics working in the first aid post at Cream nightclub in Liverpool, where patrons are taken for treatment for injuries or signs of distress. PHOTOGRAPH BY CHRISTOPHER THOMSON

Club confronts drug abuse with first aid services

Nick Varley visits Cream, in Liverpool, which is helping patrons face up to their problems

TENS of thousands of clubbers will tonight see in 1997 on one of the biggest party nights of the year. None will be safer than those at Cream in Liverpool.

The "superclub" has expanded its services beyond playing records and producing albums, into health care, becoming the first venue in England to open a first aid room to improve safety.

Paramedics deal with clubbers suffering from everything from gashed fingers to the effects of excess drinking and occasional drug misuse. Another patrols the dance floors in tandem with stewards, and refers any of the 1,800 customers looking the worse for wear to the first aid room.

Club general manager Clare Lambe said: "It is a condition that if they want to stay in the club they have to have a check-up." The medical initiative comes from a determina-

tion to confront the health problems which can arise from clubbing. "It's not a question of patching them up and pushing them back into the fray," Ms Lambe said. "It's far more long term than that. If someone needs to wake up and face what they are doing to themselves, we try to encourage them."

Police and health authorities have welcomed such openness and efforts to address reality. "There are leaflets in the club about the consequences of drug use, and one of the first aid room's main roles is counselling."

News in brief

Wife 'burned on funeral pyre'

A **BUSINESSMAN** who killed himself in front of armed police officers probably burned his wife on a funeral pyre, police said yesterday after forensic experts found fragments of human bone on burnt ground at the couple's West Yeo Moor farm at Witherside, near Tiverton, in Devon.

Theory before practice

LEARNERS will have to pass the theory element of the driving examination before being allowed to sit the practical test under new rules to be introduced tomorrow. Since theory testing was introduced in July, the Driving Standards Agency has allowed learners to choose the order in which they sit the tests as an introductory measure.

Baby's mother found

THE MOTHER of a baby abandoned in sub-zero temperatures in Whitchurch, Gwent, has been found by Northumbria police. A spokesman Gordon Chester said: "She is yet to be interviewed to establish the exact circumstances which led to the baby being abandoned."

Praise for baroness

LABOUR'S chief whip in the Lords, Lord Graham, yesterday praised Baroness Birk, a spokeswoman in the Lords with 22 years of unbroken service as government whip, minister and front-bencher, who died on Monday night after a short illness at the age of 77. He described her as "very warm, very political and absolutely devoted to the Labour Party".

Oasis prove they are no mere mirage in Radio One listeners' poll

Alex Belles
AND after all... it's Wonderwall. Oasis's anthem has been voted best tune of all time by Radio One listeners. The poll confirms the Manchester band's dominance of the pop world — they had six other entries in the top 10, with Live Forever at number four and Champagne Supernova, which has never even been released as a single, at eight.

1996

- 1 Oasis: Wonderwall
- 2 Nirvana: Smells Like Teen Spirit
- 3 Prodigy: Firestarter
- 4 Oasis: Forever
- 5 Underworld: Born Slippy
- 6 Pulp: Common People
- 7 Queen: Bohemian Rhapsody
- 8 Oasis: Champagne Supernova
- 9 Take That: Back For Good
- 10 Spice Girls: Wannabe



Liam Gallagher: top tune

1992

- 1 Queen: Bohemian Rhapsody
- 2 Led Zeppelin: Stairway to Heaven
- 3 Bryan Adams: Everything I Do
- 4 John Lennon: Imagine
- 5 Gerry Rafferty: Baker Street
- 6 Derek and the Dominoes: Layla
- 7 George Michael: Careless Whisper
- 8 The Beatles: Hey Jude
- 9 The Beatles: Hey Jude
- 10 Meatloaf: Bat Out Of Hell

ish artists. Dance music is well represented. Techno band The Prodigy are third with Firestarter and 11th with Breathe, and Underworld are at number five with Born Slippy.

Only 12 songs appear in both polls. They include John Lennon's Imagine at 23 (fourth in 1992) and Bat Out Of Hell by Meatloaf at 9 (10).

Man who jumped on altar in cathedral rampage is found unfit to plead

WORSHIPERS and staff at Westminster Cathedral yesterday told magistrates how they struggled to control a man who went on the rampage during an early morning mass.

Noel O'Connor, unemployed, kept on to the altar at the Roman Catholic cathedral, knocking a six crucifix and candlesticks to the ground and causing damage put at \$5,000, Horseferry Road magistrates were told.

who was attending the 8am mass on December 17, saw the man as he entered the cathedral. "As soon as I saw him I felt something was wrong," he said.

He climbed up the stairs, over the rope, and to my amazement he leapt on to the altar. The crucifix and candle-

sticks were waved to the floor. O'Connor, of no fixed address, faces two charges of assault and charges of making threats to kill, criminal damage, affray and possessing an offensive weapon.

Altaí, prosecuting, applied for him to be detained at a mental institution. Stipendiary magistrate Howard Riddle ruled that he accepted the prosecution case and adjourned the hearing until today, when O'Connor will be dealt with in the presence of psychiatric doctors.

Can Lloyds Bank customers use TSB cash machines?

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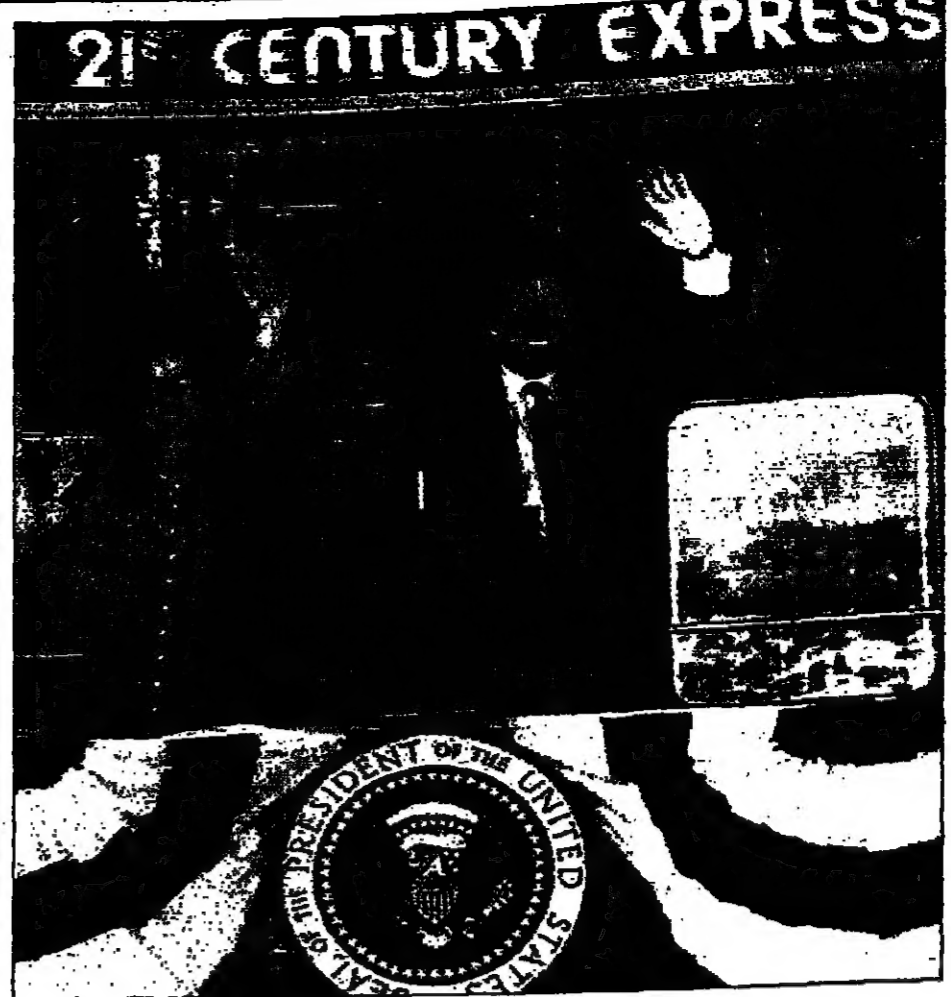
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On the campaign trail, left, Boris Yeltsin allayed the fears of voters by showing he still had plenty of energy and rhythm but paid the price after his re-election in the summer. Centre, his daughter gave him a hug during a photocall after his recovery from a multiple heart bypass operation. Right, Bill Clinton used the 21st century express to take him across America and keep the media interested in the Democratic convention.



Great survivors weigh up their debts

YELTSIN/Russia's leader is in hock to Lebed, his doctors and state workers, writes David Hearst

BORIS YELTSIN wrote himself a lenient end of term report yesterday, claiming credit for ending the war in Chechnya, and promising to do better next year.

The president said of the peace deal: "The course for peace often suffers heavy blows. But I will pursue it unwaveringly. This is the course of the president."

The agreement was negotiated by General Alexander Lebed, the man Mr Yeltsin dismissed, who has now become Russia's most popular politician.

Mr Yeltsin continued, in an interview with three Russian news agencies: "Now I am ready to tackle the most complicated problems facing Russia... I should make up for the lost time."

Mr Yeltsin was away from his desk for more than six months this year, and some real porkers were told about where he was. Three days after suffering a heart attack, Mr Yeltsin emerged to cast his vote in the second round of elections on July 3 at his sanatorium in Barvikha, when crowds of journalists were lined up to film his arrival at his customary city-centre polling station in Ozenyaya Street.

The only explanation given for this switch in venue was broadcast on the radio: "Like many Moscovites, Boris Nikolayevich cast his vote outside the city this year."

After he curtailed his inauguration ceremony on August 8, rumours began to grow about the severity of the president's ill health.

To counter these, Mr Yeltsin was reported to have a "strong handshake", to be

CLINTON/The Comeback Kid owes the Republicans more than he thinks, writes Martin Walker

BILL CLINTON paid a high price for ensuring his presidential re-election this year: his success in raising unprecedented sums for the campaign trail cost him a further round of congressional investigations into his dubious donors and associates, and weakened his already scandal-prone administration.

But the extraordinary political skill he showed in slowing down, and finally defeating, the momentum of what the Republicans had bailed as their revolution after the 1994 congressional elections also suggests his strategy of realigning the Democratic Party into the electable centre of US politics has been successful.

President Clinton promised to build "a bridge to the 21st century", but his construction methods recall President Eisenhower's in the 1950s.

Eisenhower reconciled his Republican Party to the New Deal, and Mr Clinton believes he has a similar historical role: to reconcile the Democrats to free markets and free trade, and to win their approval for a modernisation of the New Deal system of welfare.

Indeed, President Clinton's shift from the New Deal to a lesser and messier model of government was endorsed by both parties in mid-campaign.

In the week after the Republican convention in San Diego, he signed into law three bills, each passed with Republican support, which consolidated the new domestic consensus.

The first raised the minimum wage from \$4.25 to \$5.15 an hour, a long-standing Democratic objective, and one that few had predicted he would persuade the Republicans to back.

The second was the Kennedy-Kassebaum health insurance bill, which, although it was not his initial grand plan of a national health insurance system, does ensure that any worker who changes or loses his job will keep his health insurance.

The third was the welfare reform bill, which ended the

Unpaid wages were cited as the most significant event in 1996, not the end of war

scouting in Valdai, 248 miles north-west of Moscow, for a good place to rest, and to have shot "40 ducks and one boar" in Brezhnev's old hunting lodge in Zavidovo just before the visit of the German chancellor, Helmut Kohl.

The truth about the gravity his heart condition was revealed only in late September, by the surgeon who was to operate on him, Dr Renat Akhkurin.

The president performed badly when it came to fulfilling his election promises, the chief of which was to end the wage arrears to public sector workers within a month of starting his election campaign in February.

At the last count, the bill stood at 46 trillion roubles (\$4.96 billion) in unpaid back wages and pensions.

So it was unpaid wages, not the ending of the war in Chechnya, that was cited by the All-Russian Public Opinion Research Centre as the most significant event in 1996. Mr Yeltsin had to issue a decree in August cancelling 18 previous decrees he had signed on the campaign trail promising cash for social programmes and regional aid.

As for his promise to end the unpopular army conscription by the year 2001, Mr Yeltsin signed a new decree sending 17,000 university

His historical role comes close to dismantling the Democrats' core principles

those who worked, or were prepared to work.

The glorification of work has always underscored the Clinton project. His earlier legislative achievements included the Family Leave Act, which requires employers to give workers time off to care for a sick dependant, and the Earned Income Tax Credit, which effectively abolished income tax for families on less than average wages: a reform which he claimed benefited 27 million working Americans.

Mr Clinton was re-elected in part because he faced a feeble opponent in former Senator Bob Dole, but also because

he returned to the centrist ground on which he was elected in 1992.

In 1996, as in 1992, he was tough on crime, resolved "to end welfare as we know it", and promised middle-class tax cuts and a shrunken federal government.

He managed to develop a bipartisan foreign policy, despite the daunting political risk of deploying American troops to enforce a US-brokered peace in the Balkans.

He was also tough on the United Nations, forcing the secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, to retire.

And despite sending aircraft carriers after China bullied Taiwan, he agreed with Republicans that US commercial interests in China outweighed human rights concerns.

The main legacy of his first term, passed with Republican votes, was the repudiation of the bipartisan foreign policy which had put the US at the head of a global military coalition since the end of the second world war with a commercial strategy which made the US the linchpin and guarantor of a free-trading global economy.

Immediately after his re-election, Mr Clinton flew to Manila for the annual Asia-Pacific economic summit, at which a new agreement was signed to establish free trade in information technology over the next three years.

His economic policy thrived last year as the stock market boomed and the US scored the best economic performance of any of the Group of Seven countries.

But his second term may be doomed to an economic slowdown, if not recession, in both the US and Asia, which is watching nervously for China's takeover of Hong Kong.

And, ironically, the new scandal of campaign finances which is besetting his presidency stems from the generosity of Asian and American donors who sought to reward his free-trade strategies.

Strikers bring Israel to a halt

Jessica Berry in Jerusalem

ISRAEL was at a standstill yesterday on the fourth day of strikes which have brought the country to its knees and left thousands of tourists stranded at the airport.

More than 250,000 workers abandoned their posts in protest against the budget cuts proposed by the prime minister, Binyamin Netanyahu. Labour leaders say they will lead to widespread redundancies and salary cuts.

The government proposes to cut spending by \$2.15 billion (\$1.34 billion) to stop its deficits rising. The current account deficit stands at \$4.62 billion.

Industry and government officials said the strikes, which affected most of the public sector — banks, the stock exchange, the telephone company, transport, emergency services, post offices and airports — were costing the economy tens of millions of dollars.

Mr Netanyahu lashed out at the Histadrut trade union federation, accusing it of waging a political battle against his unpopular government. He said the strike was "blatantly political, irresponsible and utterly without any grounds for justification".

Officials said the strikes were also a protest against Israel's decision to reinstate financial incentives to settlers

Dozens killed by Indian train bomb

Suzanne Goldenberg in New Delhi

TRIBAL militants were suspected of detonating twin explosions which struck a crowded passenger train in the Indian state of Assam last night. The blast could be heard four miles away.

Indian news agencies quoted officials in Guwahati, the largest town in the extreme north-eastern state, as saying that they feared up to 300 passengers on the Delhi-bound Brahmaputra Mail could have been killed.

But the police control room at Kokrajhar, the nearest town to the blast site at Chechamukh, said 18 bodies had been recovered by midnight local time, and 68 injured had been taken to hospital.

Although darkness and thick jungle were delaying rescue efforts, police scaled down their estimates of the death toll early today.

The Brahmaputra Mail pulled out of the station minutes before the blast, at 7.15pm local time. Police in Kokrajhar said the engine and the first carriage passed safely over the device on the track. The next three cars were devastated. In all, five carriages were derailed.

One of the carriages is believed to have been a pantry car, which may account for the lower casualty figures than forecast.

"We heard it from our home, which is seven kilometres away," said D. Mazumdar, a sub-inspector at the Kokrajhar police station. "My wife was screaming when she heard."

No one claimed responsibility, but the authorities in Assam blamed militants from the Bodo tribe, who have been fighting for a separate state on their ancestral lands, Bodoland.

Bodo militants are particularly active in the Kokrajhar district. In May they set fire to more than 100 villages belonging to a different tribe, leaving 125,000 people homeless.

The attack on the train follows the blowing up of a bridge on Sunday night, which left the seven north-eastern states cut off from the rest of the country.

The last six months have seen an escalation in violence in Assam by the Bodo militants and Assamese guerrilla groups, who are opposed to each other.

The two splinter groups were formed when their moderate factions entered into peace agreements and electoral politics.

The Bodos claim the Assamese, who settled in the region from the 13th century, usurped their tribal lands.

News in brief

Falklands 'shared sovereignty' rejected

PRESIDENT Carlos Menem of Argentina said yesterday that Argentina and Britain should "share" sovereignty of the disputed Falkland Islands. Britain rejected the offer.

"The proposal was a result of [diplomatic] strategies changing with time", Mr Menem said in La Rioja, his home province.

"I still hope that in the year 2000 we'll see the Argentine flag flying in the islands, either by itself or alongside other flags," Mr Menem said.

"If the Argentine flag flies alongside the British flag, that would be a step forward," he added. It was the first time that Mr Menem, who has vowed to regain the islands through diplomatic means by the year 2000, has proposed joint sovereignty. Argentina's claim over the islands is enshrined in the constitution.

A Foreign Office spokeswoman rejected the suggestion. "We have no doubt of our sovereignty of the Falklands," she said.

"We are not prepared to discuss any change over the Falklands."

Almost 1,000 servicemen died in the 1982 Falklands war when British troops retook the South Atlantic archipelago from Argentine invaders.

The Argentine foreign minister, Guido Di Tella, said earlier this month that the government must change its strategy towards the islands since there was no solution favourable to Argentina in sight.

Relations between the two countries were restored in 1990 when their governments agreed to set aside the issue of sovereignty.

Last year the two countries agreed to explore for oil and gas near the Falklands. They are still trying to reach agreement on fishing rights. — AP.

FBI agent denies spying

Earl Pitts, an FBI agent, denied in Alexandria, Virginia, selling secrets to Moscow for more than \$224,000 (\$140,000). A trial was set for April 21.

Arrested on December 18, Mr Pitts, 33 years in the FBI, is the only US agent charged with spying. The FBI alleges that he took money from the Russians between 1987 and 1992. — AP.

Hostage impasse

Yemen said it would not use force while negotiations continued to free five Polish tourists held hostage by brigades in the mountainous interior, Poland's ambassador to Yemen said yesterday. — Reuter.

Crash victims

Two commuter trains ran into each other in a valley outside Brescia, Italy, yesterday, killing three people and injuring 18. — AP.

Trapped in tunnel

Up to 300 people remained trapped by avalanches in a tunnel in the Caucasus mountains yesterday. It will take at least two more days to rescue them, the Russian emergency ministry said. — Reuter.

Homes takeover

China has taken back 787 overzoned houses occupied by officers of the Beijing military region and punished 17 people in an attempt to root out dishonesty in the military, the People's Liberation Army Daily newspaper said yesterday. — Reuter.

Hair-eating dolls alert

UNITED STATES safety officials were investigating a rash of incidents yesterday in which battery-operated Cabbage Patch dolls were reported to have chewed up little girls' hair.

The Consumer Product Safety Commission is to issue a statement about the dolls, which safety experts say posed a danger to children.

"It ought to be recalled," a product liability lawyer, Edward Swartz, said. "Kids are going to experiment with that toy and entanglement injuries are being reported."

At least seven girls have caught their hair in the Cabbage Patch Snack Time Kid, a former local official, also appeared before the Kigali court yesterday, accused of organising Hutu militias in

Rwanda puts Hutu officials on trial for role in 1994 massacre

FORMER Hutu state prosecutor appeared in court in the Rwandan capital Kigali yesterday accused of helping to organise the Hutu civilian militias responsible for the massacre in Kigali of thousands of Tutsis and moderate Hutus 50 months ago.

The trial of Sibus Muryagishali, a former deputy prosecutor in the capital, was immediately adjourned to be heard by a special tribunal in Giterama prefecture, because the law forbids his prosecution in the court where he was once a prosecutor.

Theodorimir Ruzirabwoba, a former local official, also appeared before the Kigali court yesterday, accused of organising Hutu militias in

مجلس الامم

Hun Sen's largesse hides a bitter split

The co-prime minister's speech to Pol Pot defectors contrasts with his former violent rhetoric **Nick Cumming-Bruce** reports from Phnom Dey, Cambodia

THE KILLING and terror which has dogged Cambodia for much of the past 20 years seemed to be slipping fast into history as the co-prime minister Hun Sen stood up to address the crowd assembled in the old Khmer Rouge stronghold of Phnom Dey.

Prayed before him were 800 former Pol Pot soldiers, their frozen, suspicious stares offset by uniforms which confirmed their defection to the regime in Phnom Penh. Seated behind him was Ny Sary, one of the most senior of Pol Pot's commanders to fall into government hands.

But if Hun Sen had come to Phnom Dey to bury one conflict, his presence was partly the product of a bitter new feud, this time with the other co-prime minister, Prince Norodom Ranariddh. The accusations of assassination plots which generals loyal to one leader this week levelled at those supporting the other revealed how far the leaders' rivalry has now split the army.

Khmer Rouge brutality found no place in Hun Sen's speech to "my relatives, my compatriots," in which he praised their courage in defecting.

They had asked for 16 schools, he noted; he would give them 18 schools. They wanted roads; army engineers would build them.

After the speeches, he was off in a convoy of pickup trucks bouncing up dirt roads to the hospital, peering at malaria patients and pressing envelopes with a little useful cash in the hands of each. To the director went a wad of hundred dollar notes.

His relaxed style and winning largesse help explain why Hun Sen is respected even by rivals as one of Cambodia's most effective politicians. But his performance contrasted starkly with the violent rhetoric that only days earlier he fired at Prince Ranariddh and his followers in the royalist party, Funcinpec.

At a time when the government is handing out amnesty to such Khmer Rouge figures as Ieng Sary, once sentenced to death for his part in Pol Pot's genocidal terror, Funcinpec leaders are seeking an amnesty for Prince Norodom Sirivudh.

The half-brother of King Sihanouk was forced into exile early this year to escape alle-

gations of plotting to kill Hun Sen.

Hun Sen's accusation was widely seen as invention, aimed at eliminating a political competitor, and his party now wants him back.

Prince Ranariddh has applied to the King for amnesty and Prince Sirivudh has announced his determination to return.

But Hun Sen apparently will have none of it. Any aircraft carrying the Prince to Cambodia would be shot down, he warned this month.

Friends and enemies judge Hun Sen's resort to threats and intimidation in Prince Sirivudh's case as a calculated preparation for the elections in 1998. Hun Sen and the CPP ruled Cambodia before UN-run elections three years ago and make no secret of their determination to emerge all powerful from the next election.

"These people have been in power since 1979 and will fight tooth and claw for their jobs," a Western analyst said. "Violence will certainly be widespread."

Relations between the two co-prime ministers have already deteriorated to a point where they barely communicate. The council of ministers has met three or four times in the past nine months.

Funcinpec, casting around for political allies, is now moving towards an electoral alliance with smaller political parties and feverishly courted defecting Khmer Rouge commanders with whom the party was once allied in an anti-Vietnamese resistance coalition against the CPP.

Funcinpec's frustration and humiliation at the hands of the CPP have already boiled over into armed confrontation once this month, when royalist troops in Battambang fired B-40 rockets at troops loyal to the CPP. If confrontation erupts, the north-west may once again serve as Funcinpec's fall-back position.

"This is a very dangerous situation," a CPP insider said, adding that both sides were preparing contingency plans for a possible armed showdown.

"Government by the state is over. It's not politicians in control any more, it's the military commanders controlling the troops."

Hun Sen has moved swiftly to try to pre-empt them. Days before arriving in Phnom Dey, he flew to a timber-rich former Khmer Rouge base,

taking businessman with him to woo the locals.

In a few days' time he will fly to another key defectors' base. Some 90 per cent of Khmer Rouge defectors now support him, he claims.

If that figure seems absurdly high, it is partly because Hun Sen also attracts strong misgivings in his own party. Many do not appreciate his aggressive style and some have sought to mend ties with Funcinpec.

Hun Sen, protected by tanks and a praetorian guard of 600 troops, appears to set his own targets with little regard to his critics. He has toned down his rhetoric against Prince Sirivudh, offering to buy him a first-class ticket and to greet him at the airport.

Few even in his own party seem convinced this is any more than a pause before the next storm.

"It's not yet bloody, it's messy," a Western analyst in Phnom Penh said. "But no one knows what will happen. It could become a bloody mess."



A beach vendor parks his food stall in the sea at Karachi yesterday to catch customers coming back from a swim. PHOTOGRAPH: DAVID AHMED

Returned bodies mark Korea thaw

John Gittings

NORTH KOREAN loud-speakers accused the South of "butchery" as the bodies of 24 northern commandos were handed back across the border at Panmunjom yesterday.

An unprecedented apology from Pyongyang on Sunday ended three months of tense argument after the intruders landed on the east coast of South Korea from a disabled mini-submarine. It re-opens the path to economic aid and political dialogue with the US and South Korea.

Yesterday's praise for the dead commandos as "martyrs who fought like heroes" contrasted sharply with the "deep regret" expressed earlier by Pyongyang.

A voice from a loud-speaker claimed that the soldiers — who were shot on South Korean soil — had been "murdered on a regular training mission". But the apology marks a huge climbdown for the North, which must be masked by propaganda.

The whole episode suggests division — or at least confusion — in Pyongyang, where the possible collapse of its "socialist system" has been openly aired.

A recent editorial in the official Nodong Sinmun newspaper says that the people are bearing "difficult and heavy burdens", and that the future of socialism is now at stake. Recalling the demise of other socialist countries, it asks: "Which will we choose, heroic life or death? What will we become, independent people... or slaves?"

The North Korean statement was brokered by the US state department during talks in New York.

The key provision was a commitment to "ensure

that such an incident will not recur" and "work with others" for peace on the Korean peninsula.

The South Korean president, Kim Young-sam, had demanded a direct apology but settled for a form of words which avoids mentioning his country.

Mr Kim's tough line on the submarine incident led to disagreement with the US, which sought a compromise to restart the Korean peace process.

The North Korean mini-submarine ran aground near Kangnung in September and at least 26 commandos on board fled to shore. All but one were shot dead — 11 apparently in a mass suicide — while the rest were hunted down by the southern army. The survivor who surrendered has not been handed over by the South. A 26th man may have escaped back to the North.

The apology opens the way for North Korea to conclude a huge grain deal with a US company. Pyongyang has admitted that its harvest this year fell short by 1.5 million tons — which would have fed a quarter of its population.

The North has eased its rigid control of agriculture to tackle a second year of floods and famine. Farmers are now allowed to "freely dispose" of 10 per cent of their harvest if they meet the state target.

The apology will also re-open a dialogue aimed at opening talks between the US, China, and the two Koreas.

This is to bypass the North's refusal to negotiate directly with the South on security, and the South's strong objection to bilateral ties between Pyongyang and the US. China welcomed the North Korean statement.

Leader comment, page 5

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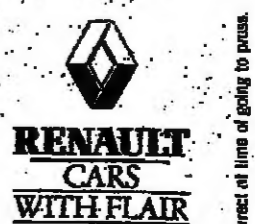
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Measuring the messages

Only Paddy Ashdown strikes a believable note

NORMALLY it is hard to know why political party leaders bother to issue new year messages to the nation. Most years these are anodyne and uninspiring pronouncements...

In 1997, it is by no means clear that it will get the change it needs from the Labour Party. Tony Blair's new year message makes an unanswerable case for the Conservatives to be defeated...

The difficulties of detente

Korea is edging forward: but it will be a tricky transition

EDGING forward towards detente on the Korean peninsula is as tricky as walking a few yards in the Demilitarised Zone between the country's two halves...

counted: the most important task is to press ahead on three fronts, with the resumption of food aid, implementation of the 1994 nuclear agreement...

Honours of a sentimental populist

The real test of daring would have been to award gongs to Oasis

IT'S A FAIR bet that there are no knights winging their way back to Buckingham Palace this morning in protest at the honour awarded today to Paul McCartney...

there today. The real test would have been to award MBEs to Oasis. Today's list shows the honours system at its best and its worst.

Those Party Leaders' New Year Messages at a glance!



Letters to the Editor

Speed saves - at 20 mph

YOUR leader (Lower speeds will save lives, December 27) is a timely reminder that we need to do more to reduce death and injuries on our roads...

THE Transport Research Laboratory finding that 20 mph zones cut accidents involving children by 67 per cent makes a powerful case for immediate government action...

Urgent implementation of these initiatives would save lives on the roads, reduce child injuries and make the streets safer for everyone.

Facts of war

VICTORIA Britain (Private view, December 26) uses the term genocide to describe the killings that occurred in Rwanda in 1994...

Searching questions, and the turning of the screw

I WAS perturbed to read of the way probation officers are being treated during official visits to prisons in England and Wales...

If it ain't got that swing

RICHARD Williams's account of the alleged death of jazz (Spontaneous combustion, December 28) is likely to prove premature. He seems to share the common prejudices that arrangement is the enemy of spontaneity...

While the music of jazz is spot on, about 25 years late. What he only hints at is that for the last 20 years the adventurousness previously in jazz is now in free improvisation...



Counting the cost, roughly

YOU MAKE an extraordinarily odd calculation of the amount of help provided by the Government under the Rough Sleepers Initiative (Matters Arising, Society Guardian, 18 December), suggesting that spending amounted to £250,000 per head...

Counting the cost, roughly

THE IDEA that probation officers might take their matter into prisons is laughable. Like all the other so-called 'civilians' working in prisons they are too intimidated by uniformed staff to dream of such a thing...

Threads in the ethnic weave

THE Census question identifying ethnic groups (Row over plan for Census labels, December 9; Letters, December 11, 12) seeks to do two things at once. It achieves neither as well as it might if it addressed them separately...

Second, the Census question is trying to ask what groups people identify with most closely. This is a question of personal opinion. An individual's opinion may change over a lifetime, and differ from that of his or her parents...

YOUR obituary of Ronnie Scott (December 27) highlighted his outstanding contribution to jazz in this country. But there was little mention of the enormous financial strain of running a jazz club six nights a week for 37 years with no state subsidy...

No complaints

I WORKED as a NHS hospital administrator from 1960 until the start of reorganisation in 1982. During my career I was responsible for the management of 14 hospitals, including Chase Farm Hospital, Enfield...

A Country Diary

SOMERSET: In Porlock Bay there is an inviting space where flat green fields reach the edge of the Bristol Channel and only a shallow bank of shingle divides land from sea...

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Handwritten text at the bottom of the page: 'مكتبة الامم المتحدة'

Diary

Matthew Norman

THIS is the time of year when diarists endure the painful duty of selecting the nuggets which will merit a permanent place in our national culture...

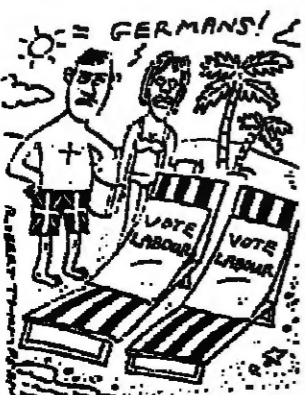
WE begin today with the contenders who came forward in 1996 in the quest to be Britain's drollest public-relations practitioners...

BUT it was not enough to win. Andrea Marks, from Edgware, Middlesex, came closer with her publishing client, BookTrack...

WE had another outstanding entry from Lloyds Bank, which explained why it was sending out questionnaires...

BUT the search ended with a winner when a medium-sized package, about right for an answering machine...

SPACE, finally, to tell you about the winner of the Diary's Rapid Rebuttal Prize of 1996. It goes, with absolutely no competition...



Beware media rats who will jump ship

Commentary Hugo Young

WE enter the year of decision, for the people but also for the power that thinks it matters most...

and ridicule, sometimes the near-hated, they have evacuated on John Major impossible to square with a last-minute endorsement...

While newspapers, too, have compiled such a well-stocked data-base of venom, instantly available on the Net...

once dared not breathe its name in tycoonish society. Even if the reward is delivered, however, the comic aspect of these writings isn't all that's to be said about them...

If Tory journalists do back Labour to win, it won't have much to do with support for the Labour project...

The compliance Labour seems to have secured from sections of the Tory press is more than a little treacherous

the government does something that brings it short-term unpopularity, having wriggled out of their hatred of Labour by reference to the brilliant qualities of Tony Blair...

How Whitehall kept poverty off the agenda



David Brindle

BEFORE they close the 1996 file on embarrassing leaks of Whitehall documents, here is one more for the tally...

This has been the International Year for the Eradication of Poverty, declared by the United Nations...

One additional, fascinating note. Shortly after the Guardian first reported the Government's refusal to act on the Copenhagen declaration...

back to Lilley, arguing that the summit declaration had been carefully worded to include Britain and to require industrialised countries to take specific, new steps to counter relative as well as absolute poverty...



Should crime-victims' families have a say in sentencing? No, cautions David Edgar - but let them channel their rightful anger into positive action

Vengeance no answer

IF, as still seems eminently possible, an Australian cab driver is asked to decide whether two British nurses are decapitated in Saudi Arabia...

Whether or not Lucille McLaughlin and Deborah Parry murdered Yvonne Gilford in the King Fahd Medical Centre in Dhahran, and whether if they did so they deserve to be publicly beheaded for it...

Hindley should be paroled, an ITN news reporter was interviewed by the mother of one of the Moors Murders victims about her feelings...

with the criminal's degree of punishment, victims' families are asked to measure their anguish on a completely inappropriate scale...

implication of your question. If Kitty was raped and murdered I would want to tear her attacker apart with my bare hands...

Victim power is a benign form of lynch law. It is bad for civil liberties. It is bad for the victims and their families

there was one - when journalists refrained from asking the victims and their relatives their opinion on the sentencing of criminals...

insist that to equate the punishment of a criminal with the grief of his victims' relatives is a false analogy...

whole purpose of the system is to acknowledge such proper, understandable and justified rage by removing the responsibility for its redress...

David Edgar is an author and playwright. His publications include Destiny, Pentecost, and a new Dr Jekyll And Mr Hyde

Advertisement for Rukba charity. Includes text: 'I do so appreciate the care and support that Rukba gives me'. Contact information: 0345 58 56 80. Website: www.rukba.org.uk

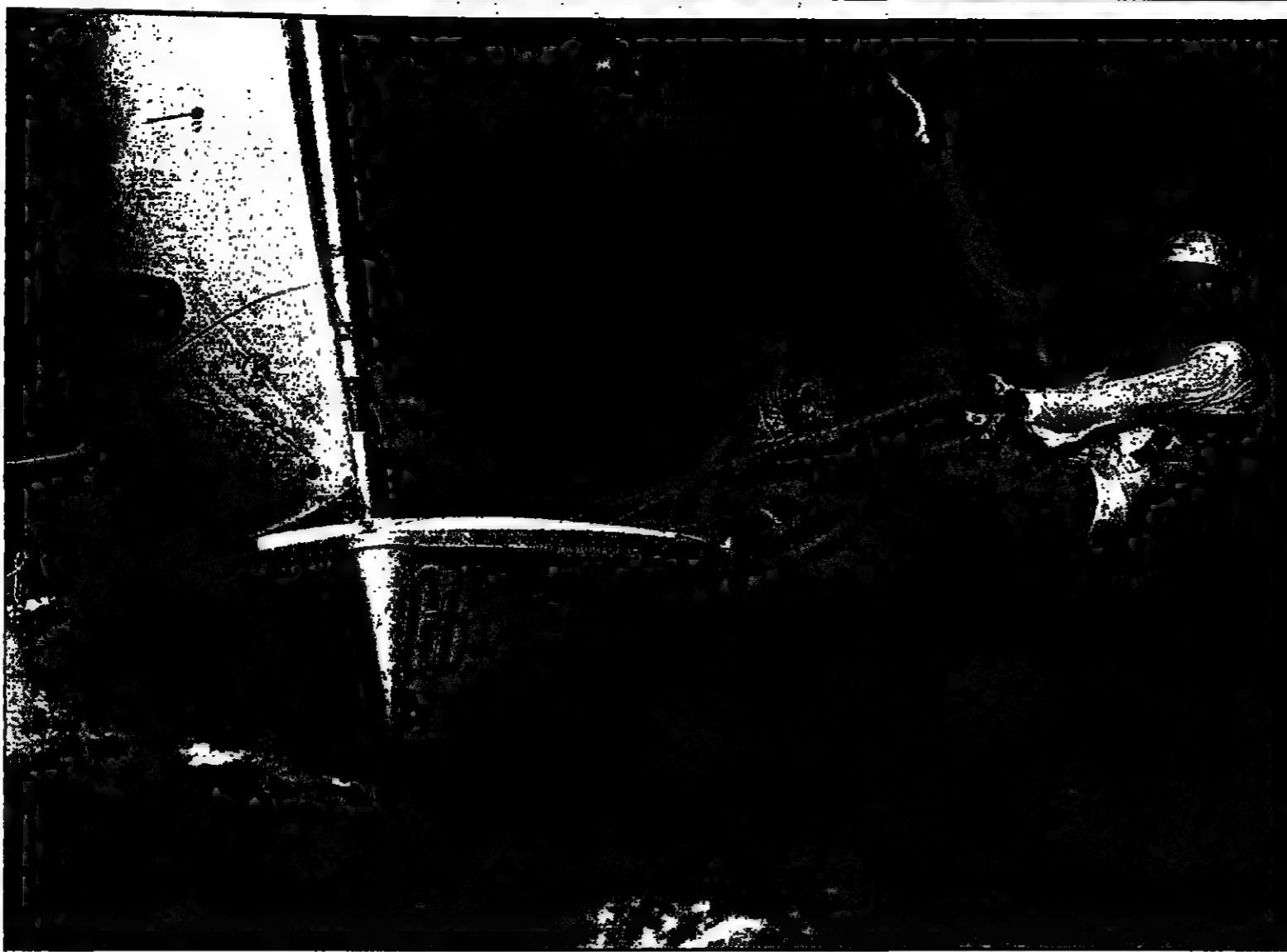
Withering of the world's workshop, page 12

Service sector firms top the market, page 12

Financial Editor: Alex Brummer
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Finance Guardian

Olympic success helps to fill Britain's yacht sales



BRITAIN'S boat industry has been given a boost by the medal-winning performance of the country's yachtsmen at the Olympics earlier this year, writes Nicholas Barnister.

Tony Beechey, chairman of the British Marine Industries Federation, said that the industry's turnover in 1996 would be well ahead of the £1.87 billion total for 1995 and that the upturn should continue into 1997.

The London Boat Show, which opens at Exeter Court on Friday, will reflect the resurgence of interest, with sailing boats rather than motor vessels dominating the exhibition's central pool.

But Britain's power boat builders have had a bumper year. "There has been a great resurgence in the sale of power boats, 90 per cent of which are exported," Mr Beechey said.

For example, Sunseekers has sold eight boats, each worth between £1.5 million and £2 million, to overseas buyers since August.

Sales of sail boats, which have been picking up slowly over the past 18 months, have been lifted by the Olympic success of Ben Ainslie, silver medal winner in the Laser class, and John Merricks and Ian Walker (pictured left), who came second in the 470 class.

The British teams' performance has sparked interest in dinghy sailing among young people.

PHOTOGRAPH: FRANK BARRON

Notebook

Honours with a whiff of lavender



Edited by Alex Brummer

THERE are distinct echoes of the late Harold Wilson's lavender resignation honours list in John Major's pre-election offering from Downing Street.

By far the most puzzling choice is the peerage for Raj Bagri, chairman of the London Metal Exchange, which was caught up in the biggest fraud scandal in financial history — the £1.8 billion loss at Sumitomo.

Among changes still needed is the establishment of a regulatory regime which will be firm and transparent enough to persuade American names that the new Lloyd's has abandoned poor custom and practice.

Of course, it is custom and practice for civil servants to be rewarded for loyal service. But the taxpayer must wonder if Christopher Wilcock, who handled the nuclear privatisation, deserves anything.

There is nothing wrong with honours as such: but if the Government is serious about wanting Britain to be the enterprise centre of Europe then it should award people like John Neill of Unipart, Bernd Pischetsrieder of BMW-Rover, Peter Wood of Direct Line and Sir Richard Greenbury of M&S who have invested in real jobs in Britain.

FORECASTING the housing market can be as hazardous as predicting the stock market. Although, strictly speaking, rational economic factors such as personal disposable income and interest rates should be the main guide to house prices, the market in homes, like that for sterling or shares, can gather a momentum of its own.

The Halifax suggests in its 1997 forecast today that next year, like 1996, will see growth of 7 per cent, with a similar rise in 1998. Putting aside whether rises on this

RAIL FARES between London and Scotland as a price war erupted between airlines and rail companies.

The Great North Eastern Railway, owned by Sea Containers and operator of the East Coast mainline service, cut the price of a single fare from London to Scotland from £45 to just £19, undercutting scheduled air fares and bringing tariffs closer to coach fares.

Table with 4 columns: Country, Rate, Country, Rate. Includes Australia 2.05, Austria 17.97, Belgium 82.93, Canada 2.25, Cyprus 0.76, Denmark 9.80, Finland 7.77, France 8.50, Germany 2.85, Greece 400.00, Hong Kong 12.75, India 60.55, Ireland 0.26, Israel 5.51, Italy 2.97, Japan 0.58, Netherlands 2.87, New Zealand 2.32, Norway 10.86, Portugal 288.00, Saudi Arabia 6.50, Singapore 2.31, South Africa 7.70, Spain 316.82, Sweden 11.44, Switzerland 2.20, Turkey 173.870, USA 7.85.

Dutch life firm buys US group

Aegon's chairman, Kees Storm, said the two companies were highly compatible. "The expansion of our traditional life insurance business, with its steady performance, provides a solid foundation for the high-growth asset accumulation and pension business we have been pursuing."

The deal — the largest life insurance acquisition in the US and one of the biggest in the world — is more evidence of the increasingly rapid consolidation in the sector.

Under the deal, expected to be completed in the first half of 1997, Provident shareholders will receive Aegon shares worth \$3.62 billion. Aegon will take on about \$780 million of debt and \$100 million of preference stock.

Provident Corporation, based in Louisville, Kentucky, operates throughout the US with 9,000 employees. The group includes Provident Bancorp, a consumer lending unit that will be spun off as a separate company.

Aegon is one of the world's 10 largest listed companies, with assets of more than \$100 billion. Three-quarters of its business is in life insurance and pensions. It is based in The Hague, operates in the Netherlands, the US, UK, Spain and Hungary, and has 5,500 staff. A company spokesman said it was too early to discuss the impact on US jobs.

City's reputation washes whiter in rain of Ks from the new year list

RAJ BAGRI, chairman of the London Metal Exchange, whose reputation as a leading marketeer has been severely undermined by the world's worst copper scandal, has been made a life peer in the honours list.

Mr Bagri's ennoblement comes only 10 days after the LME was lambasted by the Securities and Investments Board, which produced a seven-point plan to repair the damage inflicted to London's reputation for metals dealing in the wake of the \$1.8 billion Sumitomo affair.

The LME chairman, who is also chairman of the metal trader Metal Distributors, has strongly defended the role of his market executive against accusations that weaknesses in its regulatory systems allowed a rogue trader to perpetrate a massive copper fraud.

Although Mr Bagri was not personally implicated in any aspect of the copper debacle, his elevation is one of a scattering of controversial business honours in the new year honours list.

The pugnacious chairman of Ballinac and ousted boss of BP, Robert Horton, is knighted, as is Peter Davis, another robust City grande who now heads the Prudential insurance group after collecting a £2 million golden handshake from Anglo-Dutch publisher Reed Elsevier.

David Rowland also has a knighthood for his services to the insurance industry after grappling to cap the \$8 billion losses incurred by the Lloyd's market. Sir David is joined by Graeme Odgers, chairman of the Monopolies and Mergers Commission, who has been accused of denying industrial muscle rather than standing up for the consumer.

And the Government's chief economic adviser Alan Budd also becomes a knight.

Christopher Wilcock, the former head of the nuclear privatisation team at the Department of Trade and Industry, joins the list of knights even though shares in the highly contentious privatisation, which fell below the offer price, have only just started to show a profit for investors.

The list of those made CBE includes David Cawthra, former director of infrastructure services privatisation at the British Railways Board, and Honor Chapman, a partner of Jones Lang Woodhouse and one of the few businesswomen to be honoured.



In the knight line: LME's Raj Bagri and 'robust' Peter Davis

Water stops at free-market lock

NICHOLAS BARNISTER, Technology Editor

THE Government is close to a decision that will leave the water companies as the only utilities subject to detailed regulation rather than the market forces of competition.

Ministers are believed to intend to abandon plans to introduce widespread competition into the water industry on the grounds that it would be costly and impracticable.

Such a move will greatly strengthen the political role of Ian Byatt, the industry regulator, at a time when his counterparts in gas and electricity industries are relying

more on competition to improve efficiency and services. It would also bolster his argument that the privatised water and sewerage companies should keep their separate identities — and stock exchange quotations — to give him sufficient scope for making industry-wide comparisons.

Mr Byatt has argued that water companies subject to takeover from outside the industry should be resisted on the stock market as soon as possible, with at least 25 per cent of their shares being traded freely.

But ministers are believed to have accepted arguments that the cost of building a national grid for water, similar to those which already exist for gas and electricity, would be prohibitive, and would raise insurmountable problems in terms of compatibility, quality and safety.

They are also having doubts about the more modest "common carriage" proposals, under which a customer could buy water from one company but have it delivered by another.

The Environment Agency said yesterday that moving water from one catchment area to another could cause environmental problems, especially in the rivers used for transferring it.

New gloom on business failures

EVIDENCE that Britain's economic recovery may be weaker than previously assumed has come from two respected independent surveys.

According to a report from Dun and Bradstreet, the business information service, the fall in the annual rate of business failures has almost dried up while the number of business failures is still running at 790 a week.

More worrying was the finding that business failures have actually increased everywhere, apart from Scotland, Wales, London and the South-East.

In particular, there was a sharp rise in the number of failures in the East Midlands — part of Britain's traditional industrial heartland — where failures jumped by almost 18 per cent, while the West Midlands also showed a significant increase.

Margaret Beckett, shadow trade and industry secretary, added: "These figures show the Government's claims for the strength of the economy are grossly over optimistic."

The only bright spot in the survey — which Dun and Bradstreet called "disappointing" — is that small businesses are continuing to enjoy the fruits of the recovery, with a 5.5 per cent fall in small business bankruptcies, against a 6.5 per cent increase in company liquidations.

Philip Mellor, senior analyst at Dun and Bradstreet, said: "It shows that pressures of cash flow on larger businesses are tending to in-

crease, and this may well cause problems for smaller companies in 1997."

Meanwhile, a report from the CIPFA says that the new issues market has been hit by recent market jitters, with the slowdown expected to continue into the new year.

CPMG reported that while the price of a single fare from London to Scotland from £45 to just £19, undercutting scheduled air fares and bringing tariffs closer to coach fares.

House prices 'have a sixties swing'

NICHOLAS BARNISTER

THE Halifax, Britain's biggest mortgage lender, today predicts a return to the steadier housing market growth of the 1960s.

In its annual review of the housing market, the Halifax says prices have risen by about 7 per cent this year, far more than its forecast of 2 per cent.

The society predicts a 7-8 per cent rise in 1997 and 1998, followed by a gradual slowdown towards the end of the millennium.

Expected to rise by more than 10 per cent, compared with a 7 per cent increase in property sales during 1996.

The Halifax, which plans to become a bank through a stock market flotation in June, says the recovery in the housing market is "well established" and should be sustained while any rises in interest rates are moderate.

Rail fares cut to take on airlines

CHRIS BARRIE

RAIL FARES between London and Scotland as a price war erupted between airlines and rail companies.

The move, which comes into force on Sunday, follows GNER's decision last August to cut fares from Scotland to London to £19. The company said the price cut had boosted demand for seats.

The Great North Eastern Railway, owned by Sea Containers and operator of the East Coast mainline service, cut the price of a single fare from London to Scotland from £45 to just £19, undercutting scheduled air fares and bringing tariffs closer to coach fares.

THE REAL PICTURE/The closure of Yorkshire's Ferrybridge power station could spell doom for what waterways campaigners say should be a 'liquid motorway' to the North. Photograph: Don McPhee/Words: Martyn Halsall



THE closure of Yorkshire's Ferrybridge power station in five years' time threatens one of Britain's most important canal systems, waterways campaigners are claiming. Government must end its long indifference, they say, to

the "liquid motorways" now enjoying a revival as leisure traffic joins industrial shipments on silent, reflective journeys reducing lorry transport. Geoff Asprey, who moved to the Ferrybridge area seven years ago to set up an

education and pleasure canal-cruise business, said a vital link in the Aire and Calder Navigation could die without the daily passage of the coal barges, which act as dredgers. "The power station is closing in five years' time

and that's the major traffic — 45,000 tonnes a week — so they need a replacement budget," he said. Heavy transport hurred across the skyline by the power station, whose vast cooling towers overshadowed the lock-keeper's

office. Landscaping and new moorings have encouraged leisure traffic, from bird-watchers to narrow-boaters, in waters navigated by the Romans. Lock-keepers David Barker and Gary Bottomley look out on a canal-side

once alive with bonded warehouses for bacon and sugar, liquorice and molasses. Barges unloaded Cornish clay for local potteries and sand for glass first produced for Roman villas. Mr Asprey said: "There's nothing about the river you

can say is impossible; it's all been done. You are talking of thousands of tons coming in, in one go — and there's no road rage on the waterways." He said government should penalise heavy goods being taken by road

which could form suitable canal cargoes. Without a "replacement budget" to compensate for lost traffic, he said, environmentally friendly transport, and 2,000 years of commercial history, could disappear down the river.

Share success hides industrial malaise

Footsie charts changes to UK plc

IAN KING finds service sector firms floating to the top of stock market

Ian King
WHEN Courtaulds and Pilkington, two of the pillars of the industrial establishment, were dumped out of the FTSE-100 index of leading shares last week, it was a sad moment for those who cherish Britain's industrial heritage. Ironically, the pair were replaced by Hays, the distribution and recruitment group, and Mercury Asset Management, two companies epitomising the new service-based businesses which have increasingly made their mark on the commercial landscape. The move could be seen as summing up Britain's industrial decline — Pilkington, a business founded in 1826, and Courtaulds, a company whose origins go back to 1909, being replaced by a company owned by the Kuwaiti Investment Office as recently as 1980 (Hays), and one of the biggest players in a sector (financial management) frequently accused of short-termism. The shake-up was also in line with the other promotion and relegation issues that have taken place in Britain's leading share index this year. For instance, this year has seen the disappearance from

Manufacturing heavyweights

Country	Percentage of total workforce employed in the manufacturing industry
Germany	24.99
France	22.89
Italy	22.75
Spain	22.04
Japan	20.44
UK	20.12
USA	19.99
Sweden	19.42
Denmark	19.09
Netherlands	18.92
Belgium	18.86
Austria	18.70
South Korea	15.95
USA	15.10
Luxembourg	13.58

The decline of the manufacturers has been masked by the arrival of the former nationalised industries

accounted for the rest. Apart from Pearson, there was no representative of what has become the media sector, one of the stock market's powerhouses in the 1990s. The balance in the Footsie has shifted remarkably and there are now as many service stocks as manufacturing ones. Indeed, if the privatisation stocks are stripped out, the decline of the industrial and manufacturing stocks as a percentage of the index appears even more dramatic. The decline of the engineers and manufacturers has been

Workshop of the world has put up the shutters

MARK MILNER on figures showing how Britain's manufacturing has withered

BITAIN has only two representatives in a European Union top 20 of manufacturing regions, according to research published today by the GMB trade union. The findings, based on a labour-force survey compiled by Eurostat, represent an indictment of Conservative industrial policy and underline the need for greater investment in manufacturing industry, according to the GMB. The research ranks the East Midlands fifteenth in a list based on the percentage of jobs taken by manufacturing,

while the West Midlands surges in at number 20. The report shows that six of the regions with the heaviest concentrations of manufacturing jobs are in Germany, where unemployment is about four million. Italian regions claim another three top 10 places. Top of the list is Baden-Württemberg, where manufacturing jobs account for 43 per cent of the total. That compares with 35.4 per cent in the East Midlands and 34.4 per cent in the West Midlands. The next most highly placed UK region is the North-west, at 27. Wales takes thirty-first place, Scotland ranks number 48 and Northern Ireland fifty-first. The lowest scoring UK region is the South-east, where barely one job in five is in manufacturing. The GMB's general secretary, John Edmonds, said:

"Nothing illustrates better the dismal failure of Tory industrial policy than this league table. There was a time when Britain was the workshop of the world, and the West Midlands was the workshop of Britain. Now the West Midlands just scrapes into the top 20. It was inconceivable in the early days of Thatcherism to say that manufacturing did not matter. It does. The prosperity of Europe's regions is in direct relationship to their manufacturing base. The UK needs a sustained period of investment in its manufacturing industries to secure the country's future." Though most British regions clock up below average scores, the area which scores lowest is the South-east, where barely one job in five is in manufacturing. The GMB's general secretary, John Edmonds, said:

News in brief

Unfair dismissal cases increase

The number of unfair dismissal cases has increased by a third over the past five years, according to figures disclosed in a parliamentary answer by trade and industry minister John Taylor. Industrial Tribunals heard almost 10,000 cases in the year to March 1996, compared with fewer than 7,000 in 1991-92. The success rate has fallen from 45 per cent to 38 per cent, but that still left more successful verdicts than five years ago.

Lucky purchase

Pools company Littlewoods has bought UK Charity Lotteries, operator of the Lucky lottery brand which operates mainly in London and the South-east. The combination of Lucky with Littlewoods' existing Scratchies scratchcards business will produce total turnover of £70,000.

Bank staff 'solid'

Finance union Biff has predicted a "massive response" to a call for a Scottish bank strike on Thursday. The strike, called to defend the traditional January 2 holiday

Yard chief cops art

The former head of Scotland Yard's Art and Antiques Squad is to join Nordstern, the art and antiques insurance company. Charles Hill, involved in the recovery of Munch's Scream, will build risk-prevention strategies and advise clients on security and recovery of stolen items.

Rochet leads rescue

Marc Rochet, the chairman of the French subsidiary of British Airways, TAT, was yesterday appointed chairman of Air Liberté, marking the long-awaited takeover by BA of the insolvent French carrier. Under the rescue plan, BA is expected to take a 70 per cent stake and its partner, Banque Paribas, 30 per cent.

Northern okays US offer

Northern Electric yesterday recommended that shareholders accept a £782 million offer from US utility CalEnergy, ending the controversial two-month takeover battle for the British utility.

صحة من الامل

Pillar Cup C

Racing

Pillar to test Hill's Cup credentials

Chris Newkins

COOME HILL, the highly impressive Honey winner, was the subject of a \$4,000 bet with Coral for the Cheltenham Gold Cup yesterday and was cut to 9-1 from 12-1.

Although Coome Hill is entered for Saturday's Midway, Cazalet Chase at Sandown he is short of work and is more likely to wait for the Pillar Property Investments Chase at Cheltenham at the end of next month, when he could meet One Man and Rough Quest.

"The weather has held us up but we worked him on the beach at Bude this morning and he did a good bit," said Walker Dennis, his trainer, yesterday.

"But we'd like him to be spot on when he runs and the Cheltenham race obviously gives us more time."

Dennis was fascinated to hear of the Gold Cup bet, but was emphatic it was not stable money.

Collier Bay, Alderbrook and Pridwell are all en-

tries for the Pertemps Hurdle at Sandown on Saturday, the race hastily arranged to replace the abandoned Christmas Hurdle at Kempton.

The last time this trio met was when they filled the first three places in the Champion Hurdle at Cheltenham with Collier Bay beating Alderbrook by two and a half lengths.

Unfortunately, even if Sandown beats the current cold snap, the ground there is likely to be soft.

Soft going is a prerequisite for Alderbrook, while Collier Bay is also entered in the Northern Handicap Hurdle at Haydock and will run whenever the ground is more suitable.

Jim Old, his trainer, commented: "He's in great form and although he loves Sandown, I'm afraid the ground is likely to be too firm for him."

Bimsey, just beaten by Large Action in the Bula Hurdle at Cheltenham last time, Castle Sweep and Dabo Star are among the Sandown entries and in normal circumstances the race would be highly informative.

There seems to be a good chance of Catterick going ahead today in which case Nick The Beak (1.30), trained by John Upson, looks nap material in the Barton Conditional Jockeys Handicap.

Upson has taken a dive down the training ladder in recent seasons, never seeming to have recovered from the 1993 Grand National fiasco when his strongly fancied Zetes Son was denied a run.

A fuming Upson was threatening the authorities with all sorts of legal action after that but nothing much materialised, rather like the equine talent at his stables in Northamptonshire in recent seasons.

One of the reasons is that his horses have had persistent virus problems, but there are signs that the nightmare is coming to an end and Nick The Beak could hit stable spirits this afternoon.

He is dropped in class here after finishing a very respectable third to Cadogold and Sparkling Yasmin at Chesham last time.

This is quite a competitive event and Troodos and Smart Approach will have their supporters.

Troodos won in fast time at Sedgfield recently over an extra two furlongs and there is no doubt about his ability to see out this extended three miles and a furlong.

Another to run well at a recent Catterick meeting is Chummy's Saga (2.50), who would not have to improve much on his second to Faraway Blues last month to take the Fingal Selling Hurdle.

The two divisions of the Stand Maiden Hurdle feature a couple of decent flat performers in Bolla Frank (12.30) and Night Dance (3.30), both of whom showed promise at their first efforts over timber.



All to play for... Rawl (centre) and Darryll Holland turn for home at Lingfield with a narrow lead which they maintained to the line PHOTO: FRANK BARON

Holland head-hunted for Kelleway job

GAY Kelleway wants Darryll Holland to be her stable jockey for next year. After Holland had ridden Rawl to victory for her at Lingfield yesterday, the trainer said: "I need a top-class jockey as I will have a lot of horses next year."

"I need someone like him for the ride on Musher in the 2,000 Guineas. Also, Sorbie Tower will be going for Group One races and Russian Group needs a good jockey."

Manchester-born Holland, 24, was reluctant to commit himself. He said: "We are going to talk about it but no firm decision has been made yet."

At Leopardstown yesterday, Theatreworld pronounced to form when he made all the running for an impressive success in the December Festival Hurdle.

"We have tied his tongue down since the Bula Hurdle and I made no secret of the fact he was working much better since. We will probably keep him for the AIG Europe Champion Hurdle rather than running him in the Ladbrokes here on Saturday week," said O'Brien.

O'Brien revealed that Urduback is his likely main Ladbrokes hope, the top-weight having recovered from the marathon journey that preceded his Newbury defeat by Zabadi.

Catterick the one ray of hope

ONLY Catterick, due to race today and tomorrow, holds out serious hopes of being able to stage jump racing over the next few days as the sport remains firmly in an icy grip.

James Sanderson, racecourse manager at Catterick, said: "We have had no adverse weather so far and would have been able to race every day since Christmas."

Today's Taunton and Warwick cards were called off yesterday and Fontwell is subject to a 7.30am in-

spection. Some frost is still in the ground.

Exeter, one of six scheduled turf meetings tomorrow, was called off yesterday. Inspections will be held today for Cheltenham, Leicester, Windsor and Uttoxeter, and Thursday's two jump fixtures at Ayr and Market Rasen are under threat. They will also inspect today.

All-weather racing will be held every day this week after the BHB gave the go-ahead for an additional meeting at Wolverhampton on Saturday.

Catterick card with guide to the latest form

1.20 Beller Phoebe 1.00 Karmachan 1.30 NICK THE BEAK (nap)	2.00 Yule Potts 2.30 Chummy's Saga (nap) 3.00 Newlyweds (nap) 3.30 Night Dance
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Collier Bay to ride, 9. Doncaster Milehand.

1.2.30 STANLEY MAIDEN HURDLE (2) IN FLAT CLASS
1 40-41 BOLLIN FRANK (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
2 40-42 DONNY VELL TOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
3 40-43 DONALD BARKER (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
4 40-44 GOLF LAMB (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
5 40-45 NICKY CHAMBERS (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
6 40-46 JAMES HILL (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
7 40-47 RICHARD TAYLOR (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
8 40-48 PEARCE LLOYD (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
9 40-49 FRANKIE CLAYTON (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
10 40-50 PETER HOPKINS (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
11 40-51 JAMES HILL (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
12 40-52 JAMES HILL (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty

2.00 STANLEY MAIDEN HURDLE (2) IN FLAT CLASS 1 40-41 BOLLIN FRANK (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 2 40-42 DONNY VELL TOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 3 40-43 DONALD BARKER (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 4 40-44 GOLF LAMB (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 5 40-45 NICKY CHAMBERS (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 6 40-46 JAMES HILL (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 7 40-47 RICHARD TAYLOR (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 8 40-48 PEARCE LLOYD (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 9 40-49 FRANKIE CLAYTON (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 10 40-50 PETER HOPKINS (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 11 40-51 JAMES HILL (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 12 40-52 JAMES HILL (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty	2.25 CHEVY CHEVY 2.55 Admon 3.25 New Sale
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Lingfield all-weather Flat programme with form guide

1.15 Stragglethorn 1.35 Karmachan 1.55 New Year Golf Lover	2.25 Chevvy Chevvy 2.55 Admon 3.25 New Sale
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Collier Bay to ride, 9. Doncaster Milehand.

1.2.55 HASTINGS APPRENTICE HURDLE (2) IN FLAT CLASS
101 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
104 102-103 MATTHEW WITTENBERG (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
105 102-103 MATTHEW WITTENBERG (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
106 102-103 MATTHEW WITTENBERG (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
107 102-103 MATTHEW WITTENBERG (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
108 102-103 MATTHEW WITTENBERG (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
109 102-103 MATTHEW WITTENBERG (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
110 102-103 MATTHEW WITTENBERG (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty

2.25 HERRING HURDLE (2) IN FLAT CLASS 401 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 402 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 403 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 404 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 405 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 406 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 407 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 408 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 409 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 410 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty	2.25 CHEVY CHEVY 2.55 Admon 3.25 New Sale
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Results

1.08 (1m 80y) ANCATURA C Rider 1.08 (1m 80y) ANCATURA C Rider 1.08 (1m 80y) ANCATURA C Rider 1.08 (1m 80y) ANCATURA C Rider 1.08 (1m 80y) ANCATURA C Rider 1.08 (1m 80y) ANCATURA C Rider 1.08 (1m 80y) ANCATURA C Rider 1.08 (1m 80y) ANCATURA C Rider 1.08 (1m 80y) ANCATURA C Rider 1.08 (1m 80y) ANCATURA C Rider	2.00 (2m 50y) STANLEY MAIDEN HURDLE (2) IN FLAT CLASS 1 40-41 BOLLIN FRANK (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 2 40-42 DONNY VELL TOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 3 40-43 DONALD BARKER (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 4 40-44 GOLF LAMB (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 5 40-45 NICKY CHAMBERS (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 6 40-46 JAMES HILL (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 7 40-47 RICHARD TAYLOR (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 8 40-48 PEARCE LLOYD (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 9 40-49 FRANKIE CLAYTON (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 10 40-50 PETER HOPKINS (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 11 40-51 JAMES HILL (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty 12 40-52 JAMES HILL (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
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Fontwell Park runners and riders

1.10 Hattersley Bruce 1.40 Spring Hill 1.40 Sagar Inn	2.40 Let's Be Frank 3.10 The Misses Captain 3.40 Harrow
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Collier Bay to ride, 9. Doncaster Milehand.

1.10 FONTWELL BELTING HURDLE (2) IN FLAT CLASS
1 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
2 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
3 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
4 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
5 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
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7 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
8 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
9 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty
10 102-103 MORE THAN YOU KNOW (12) M J Harrison 4-11-5 J Harty

Soccer

Royce plugs a gap with Phelan

INTERNATIONAL defender will complete the formalities of a £280,000 transfer to Manchester City...

Duffy lands at Hibernian

JIM DUFFY was appointed manager of Hibernian in some style yesterday when, at the expense of the club's controlling shareholder Tom Farmer...

Ince banned for four matches

THE England midfielder Paul Ince was given a four-match ban yesterday for protesting with foul language and abusive gestures...

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THE GUARDIAN INTERACTIVE

Ruud Gulit was promoted to player-manager.

The AC Milan forward Denzar Savovic is expected to join Manchester United in the summer.

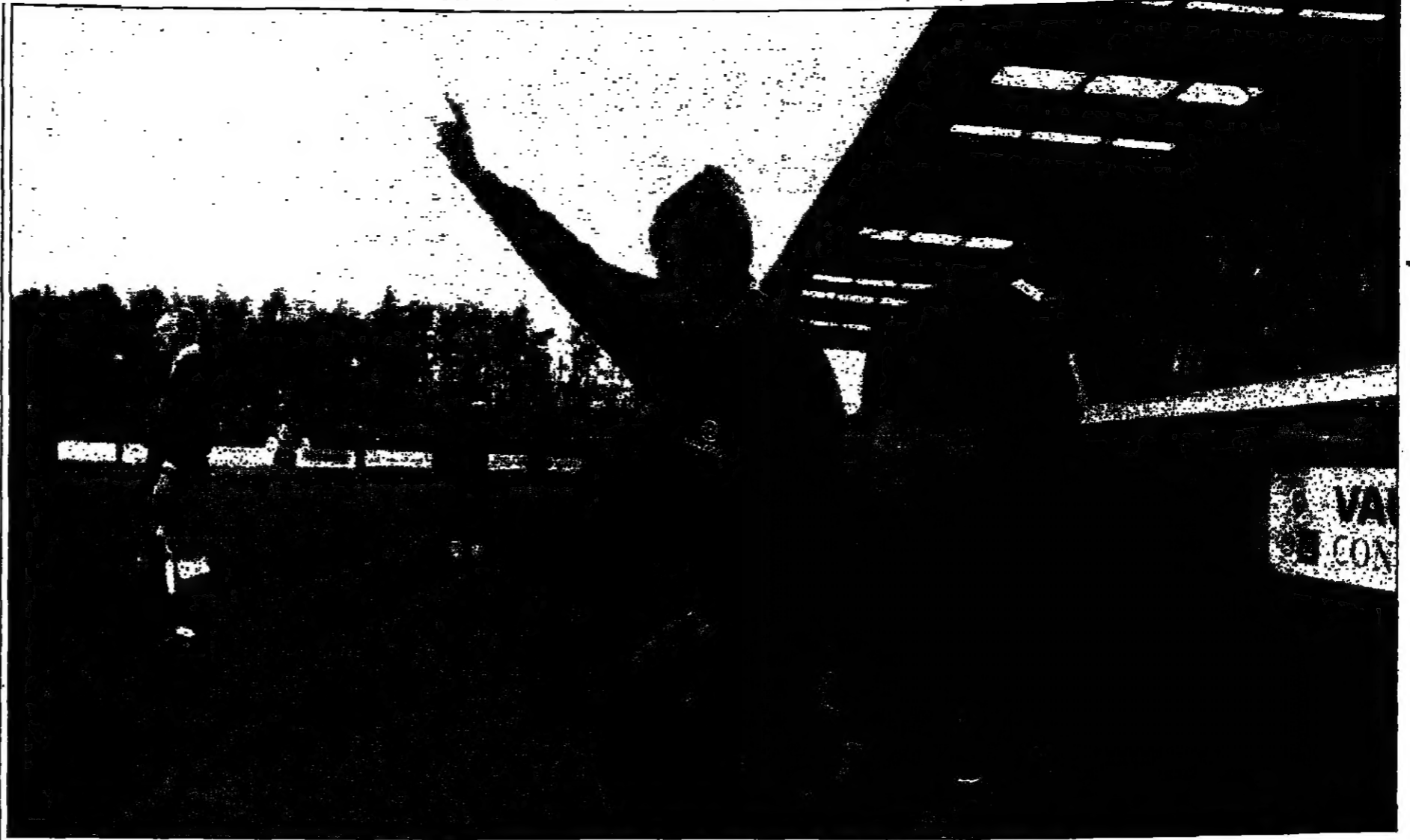
Bryan Robson could be forced into a comeback at Arsenal tomorrow.

The Middlesbrough manager, who may be without as many as 10 players, said: "I'm definitely in the squad and then it depends on the injuries."

Middlesbrough also expect to receive a work permit for the Slovakian international left-back Vladimir Kinder this week.

The Manchester United full-back Phil Neville has been ruled out for a month after going down with glandular fever.

The last 10,000 tickets for England's World Cup qualifying match with Italy in February will go on sale on Thursday from 9am.



Cup pointer? ... Stevenage's manager Paul Fairclough gives instructions during Saturday's visit of Hayes, who were 3-0 down when the game was abandoned at half-time

FA CUP PROFILE

Stevenage face welcome distraction

REVENGE is a dish best eaten cold. So when Barry Hayes runs on to the pitch at St Andrews on Saturday he will have ice in his heart...



'A misconduct charge can carry any level of punishment. Relegation is within the FA's wide range of powers'

Report by Mark Redding

Eighteen months ago the Steve Bull of Stevenage Borough was given a trial by Birmingham City and was devastated when nothing came of it.

There the matter should have ended, but the legal action proved to have an unpleasant postscript when the court heard that the innocent Hayes was worth his weight in gold to Stevenage in more ways than even he could have suspected.

Last March, the court was told, the Stevenage chairman Victor Green had made an unexpected phone call to the Torquay United chairman Mike Bateson.

According to Bateson, Green said an unnamed club had offered £100,000 for Hayes. He then suggested that Torquay should pay Stevenage £20,000 not to sell the striker.

Green... promotion the aim... The Conference and had a ground that was up to standard, would have had a better chance of overhauling Stevenage.

Results

Soccer: Premier League: Arsenal 1-0 Liverpool, Manchester United 2-1 Chelsea...

Tennis: Australian Open: Andre Agassi 6-3, 6-4, 6-4 Petr Dondokoff, Boris Becker 6-2, 6-4, 7-6(5-7), 6-2, 7-6(5-7) Michael Stich.

Cricket: Australia 2-0 England in Test match, Australia 2-0 England in ODI match.

Darts: Phil Taylor 4-0 James Watt, Michael van Gerwen 4-0 Peter Ebdon.

Ice Hockey: Pittsburgh Penguins 4-3 New York Rangers, New Jersey Devils 4-3 Philadelphia Flyers.

ENGLAND BATTING: J.P. Crawley 3, M. Atherton 103, M.A. Atherton 119, S. Cook 14, A.D. Murray 11.

ZIMBABWE BATTING: P.A. Strang 2, A.R.R. Campbell 2, A. Flower 2, G.W. Flower 2, G.J. van der Merwe 2.

ENGLAND BOWLING: J.P. Crawley 2-27, M. Atherton 1-5, M.A. Atherton 1-5, S. Cook 1-11, A.D. Murray 1-11.

ZIMBABWE BOWLING: P.A. Strang 1-12, A.R.R. Campbell 1-12, A. Flower 1-12, G.W. Flower 1-12, G.J. van der Merwe 1-12.

work that has led to the club's climb up the non-League pyramid with four championships in six years...

'A misconduct charge can carry any level of punishment. Relegation is within the FA's wide range of powers'

'It concerns us, of course it does, but I can't comment on it at all', the Stevenage chairman said.

First out of the hat in the draw, they switched the tie to Birmingham where there is a 25,000 capacity, and they will be hoping that history repeats itself.

'Our prime concern is to win the Conference and try and get into the Football League', said Green.

Wednesday band banned on Wednesday

THE SEASON of goodwill ended abruptly for Sheffield Wednesday's fans' band yesterday when they were barred from their club's New Year's Day fixture.

The nine-strong group were told they were not welcome at Derby because of fears expressed by the home club's safety officer and other baseball ground officials.

They are concerned that home fans in sections adjoining the away end may be provoked by the visitors' drum and horn support.

Despite board-level lobbying on the musicians' behalf, their songs - which were to include a version of And I Love My Country for the day - will be absent.

'At Chelsea on Saturday the away section was both below and next to home fans but there was no trouble at all.

Members of the Wednesday board are said to be furious at the snub, which they suspect is more to do with discouraging noisy support than any real safety concern.

But a spokesman for Derby, which will have a jazz band of its own at the game, said: "Our safety officer has deemed it inappropriate for the band to be allowed in because of the lay-out of our away end."

"The Sheffield band are welcome at their ground but this is the Baseball Ground and we can provide the entertainment."

Sport in brief

Rugby Union: Ricky Evans, the former Wales prop who left Llanelli for Cardiff last month, will make a final "guest" appearance for the Scarlets against daily today, provided Stradey Park is passed fit this morning.

Darts: Michael Adams, top seed in the Hastings Premier, crashed to his third successive defeat when Edouard Zentgraf, the Lithuanian champion, outplayed him in a 50-move Karo-Kano Defence.

Tennis: Judge Joachim Plass, trying Steffi Graf's father Peter on charges of tax evasion, said yesterday he expected to give his verdict next month.

Pools Forecast Sat, January 4: 27 Beighams, 28 Concador, 29 Concador, 30 Concador.

WORLD'S SCOTTISH PREMIER DIVISION: 35 Aberdeen, 36 Aberdeen, 37 Aberdeen.

SCOTTISH FIRST DIVISION: 40 Aberdeen, 41 Aberdeen, 42 Aberdeen.

TENNIS: 43 Aberdeen, 44 Aberdeen, 45 Aberdeen.

HOCKEY: 46 Aberdeen, 47 Aberdeen, 48 Aberdeen.

BASEBALL: 49 Aberdeen, 50 Aberdeen, 51 Aberdeen.

قلمنا في الامل

Stal gets... I can next y says... Police Leach... Marsh kick...

Sports Honours

Stalwart Bedser finally gets his knighthood

Frank Keating

ALEC BEDSER'S long-overdue knighthood...

awarded the CBE in 1992, the year after this previously stalwart bowler retired as chairman of England's selectors...



Bedser... long overdue



Botham... four golds



Offiah... whizz on the wing

Rugby League

Rhinos capture final imports

Paul Fitzpatrick

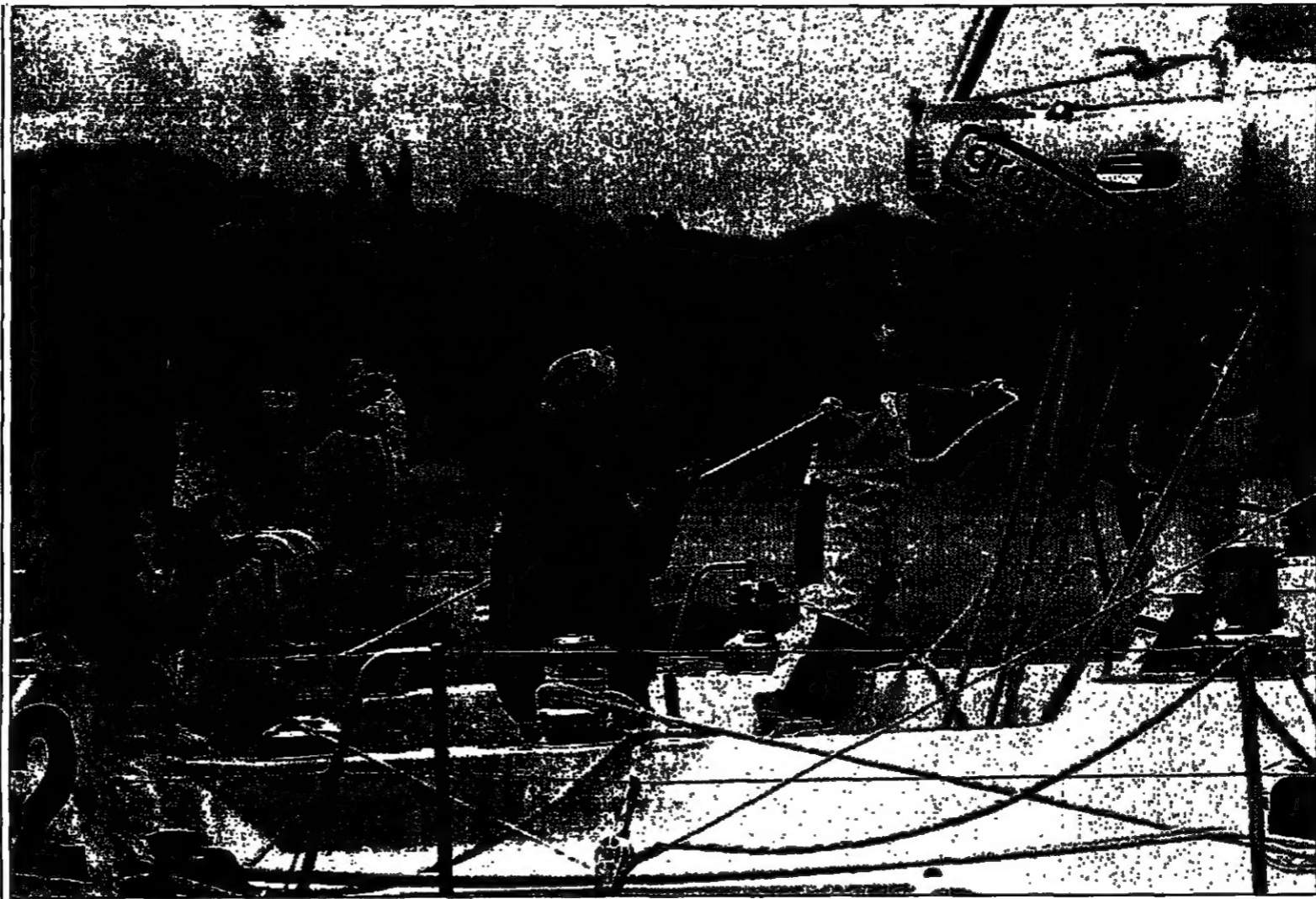
LEEDS RHINOS have filled their overseas register with the signings of the Tongan prop...

Tennis

'I can be No. 1 next year' says Hingis

MARTINA HINGIS believes she can crown her meteoric rise by dethroning Steffi Graf...

"She always was the most important thing in my tennis. I hope it stays like that...



Clap hands on deck... the crew of Group 4 show their delight as she crosses the line in Wellington harbour yesterday

PHOTOGRAPH: MARK PEPPER

Group 4 drifts in to second victory

GROUP 4 maintained her dominance of the FT Global Challenge when she led the other 13 yachts into Wellington harbour yesterday to take the second leg after 40 days' sailing from Rio de Janeiro...

Winfield declined to be drawn on whether Group 4 would win the race, which goes the "wrong way" around the world...



Golding... winning skipper

Ice Hockey

Police review Leach injury

Vic Batchelder

POLICE have asked to see a video of the controversial Boxing Day game between Sheffield Steelers and Cardiff Devils in which Steelers' Canadian forward Jamie Leach suffered a double fracture of his left cheekbone...

point in each of the other two, including Saturday's 3-2 overtime defeat at Sheffield...

A bad tackle from behind is like an elephant...

Robert Pryce kept his ears flapping for the wit of '96 - not all of it from the Prime Minister

So all credit to Terry, all credit to those players and may I continue it... Glenn Hoddie's first touch of the season...

Cruid Brown, who selected that Scotland team. It's 2,000 of us against 70,000 drunkards...

American Football

Packers block 49ers' way

ON A wet and windy afternoon in San Francisco the usually potent 49ers offense managed only two touchdowns against the Philadelphia Eagles...

touchdown pass in the third quarter. "We played very effective mud football today," said Young. "I don't care what the stats say, we played an effective ball game..."

Hockey

Marsh kick-starts East

Pat Rowley

SARAH MARSH, a 20-year-old British kick-boxing champion, showed her hockey prowess while playing for East at Milton Keynes yesterday, finishing as top scorer in the Women's Junior Territorial Tournament...

was stopped for the lines to be cleared and after that players were unsure of the footing...

Team talk

The independent news and reports service

0891 33 77+

Table with football teams and scores

GUARDIAN INTERACTIVE logo and contact info

Cup fighters courting trouble, page 14
The smart Sir Alec, page 15

Everton back in transfer market, page 14
Hingis eyes Graf crown, page 15

SportsGuardian

MOVE OVER ALAN BALL, ASA HARTFORD, STEVE COPPELL AND PHIL NEAL...

Clark steps in to City - boots and all

FRANK CLARK became the latest hopeful to tread a familiar path yesterday when he became Manchester City's fifth manager this season.

Less than a fortnight after leaving Nottingham Forest, Clark has been asked to undertake a damage-limitation exercise at Maine Road. A task which he himself described as "very difficult" begins at Birmingham City tomorrow, where if they lose they could sink ever closer to the bottom of the First Division.

This season City's first-team affairs have been handled by Alan Ball, who resigned in late August, Steve Coppell, who quit in November after only 33 days in charge, and the caretakers **Asa Hartford** and **Phil Neal**.

And as the 53-year-old Clark was installed as City's 16th full-time manager in 25 years, there was another departure: **Tony Book** was sacked after 30 years as player, manager, caretaker manager and, latterly, first-team coach.

"The decision had nothing to do with me," said Clark, who is expected shortly to invite his assistants at Forest, **Alan Hill** and **Liam O'Kane**, to join him at Maine Road.

Despite City's perilous position, Clark said he was delighted with his new assignment. "Why did I take the job? I was out of work and I do need to work," he said. "This was always going to be a massive opportunity for someone and I am pleased that someone is me."

"Manchester City has enormous potential. I know that's said of all clubs but on Boxing Day they attracted a crowd of 30,000 and at the weekend they took 6,000 supporters to Barnsley. The club needs stabilising but, even so, it doesn't sound like a job from hell to me."

Clark is believed to have about £10 million to help regenerate the senior squad. His first act as manager will be to try to sign Forest's reserve-team goalkeeper **Tommy Wright**, currently on loan at Reading.

The size of Clark's job became immediately clear when he was asked to outline his ambitions. "I am sure that we can avoid relegation," he said. "I haven't actually seen City play this season but have been told they are lacking in confidence. I am just hoping that some of the players are simply underachieving."

"My job is to realise what potential there already is here and then to add to it when I feel it is necessary."

Clark's appointment may come to represent a watershed because although his 3½-year contract worth £5,000 a week was apparently negotiated by **Francis Lee**, the City chairman's influence appears to be waning. It is believed Clark was the choice of City's new majority shareholder **Stephen Bolser**; Lee had spent the previous four weeks negotiating with the former Leeds manager **Howard Wilkinson**.



Putting his best foot forward... Frank Clark, City's 16th full-time manager in 25 years, arrives at Maine Road yesterday. PHOTOGRAPH: MICHAEL STEELE

Captains at daggers drawn as series ends under dark cloud

David Hopps in Harare

ENGLAND'S disastrous overseas record in recent years means there are few places left in the world where they can be accused of a superiority complex. If only it would happen after a Test series in Australia. Instead the charge was levelled yesterday by Zimbabwe's captain **Allister Campbell** as a drawn Test series degenerated into a game of little victories.

Michael Atherton's determination to present England as moral victors — claiming that had the weather not intervened they would have won both Tests, in Bulawayo and here — had a good deal of logic on its side but left Campbell infuriated at what he regarded as patronising English attitudes.

"All this gets under my skin," he said after overnight rain had ruled out the final day's play with the second Test at Harare Sports Club intriguingly poked at England's superiority complex and accept that both sides were evenly matched. I don't think there's too much to choose between New Zealand, England, and ourselves at the moment."

As Zimbabwe are rated as the weakest Test nation in the world, with New Zealand and England generally regarded as the two countries just above them, Campbell's assessment was damning. However much England dressed things up, in his mind they had now joined Zimbabwe at the bottom of the pile. You're as Bad As We Are. You could almost smell the tabloid headlines.

Campbell and Atherton are not natural soul mates. Atherton is the detached Oxford graduate who chooses his words carefully and who is most relaxed when he is socialising with close friends. Campbell is readily identifiable as a blunt and uncomplicated southern African who needs no second invitation to speak his mind.

Atherton also recognises the political importance of presenting a drawn series in the best possible light. It is less than two months, after

Full Harare scoreboard

ENGLAND		ZIMBABWE		ENGLAND		
First innings		First innings		Second innings		
N V Knight c A Flower b George	48	T B Power c Crawley b Gough	76	N V Knight c Campbell b String	86	
M Atherton c Campbell b Whittall	12	M Atherton c Campbell b Whittall	12	M Atherton c Campbell b Whittall	12	
T A J Stewart c G W Flower b Street	18	T A J Stewart c G W Flower b Street	18	T A J Stewart not out	104	
N Hussain c A Flower b Street	15	D L Houghton c Stewart b George	83	D L Houghton c Stewart b George	83	
G P Thorpe c Deaker b Street	11	A Flower b Gough	6	G P Thorpe not out	60	
J P Crawley not out	47	A J Walter bow b Tulstiel	4	G P Thorpe not out	60	
C White c George b Whittall	8	G J Whittall b Gough	4	Extras (lb, nb)	7	
R D B Croft c G W Flower b Whittall	14	A A String not out	47	Total (for 3, 98 overs)	188	
G Gough b String	2	H H Strauss c Crawley b Croft	7	Full of wickets 7, 76, 88		
D Maddy b S b Whittall	0	H H Strauss c Gough b Croft	7	14-6-2-0; String 25-6-2-2; G W Flower 7-2-4-2		
P C R Tufnell b Street	0	H K Olonga c Hussain b Croft	0	Croft, D Gough, A D Maddy, P C R Tufnell		
Extras (lb, nb, vt, nb)	18	R Ross (not out)	16	Extras (lb, nb)	7	
Total (92.1 overs)	198	Total (108 overs)	218	Total (for 3, 98 overs)	188	
Full of wickets 24, 53, 61, 68, 73, 94, 108, 123, 134		Full of wickets 5, 48, 110, 121, 126, 138, 157, 211		Full of wickets 7, 76, 88		
Best bowling 24-1-1-43-0; Strauss 19-5-25-0; George 1-1-29-1; Whittall 19-5-18-4; String 18-7-31-1		Best bowling 15-5-47-1; Brander 21-5-45-0; Olonga 7-0-31-5; Whittall 14-6-2-0; String 25-6-2-2; G W Flower 7-2-4-2		Best bowling 15-5-47-1; Brander 21-5-45-0; Olonga 7-0-31-5; Whittall 14-6-2-0; String 25-6-2-2; G W Flower 7-2-4-2		Best bowling 15-5-47-1; Brander 21-5-45-0; Olonga 7-0-31-5; Whittall 14-6-2-0; String 25-6-2-2; G W Flower 7-2-4-2

opted, on current form, for Stewart (but only as a batsman), Knight, Crawley, Croft and Gough. Both Atherton and his vice-captain Hussain were omitted.

But what really infuriated Campbell was what has angered Zimbabwe's cricketing public for the past week: the outburst of **David Lloyd**, England's coach, after they failed by one run to win in Bulawayo.

"For them to say 'We murdered you and you know it' is clutching at thin air," he said. "As far as I'm concerned they are just trying to keep the press satisfied or to con themselves. It became quite monotonous and good our guys up."

One wonders how enthusiastically England will look forward to a return to Zimbabwe. This may be one of the more relaxed places on earth but it is doubtful whether England have ever realised it.

emerged as the strongest team," he said. "But for two hours lost to rain in Bulawayo we would have won, and we would have won in Harare if it wasn't for the weather."

"We began both Tests badly but we have played positive cricket. We took up the challenge in the run chase in Bulawayo, and we would have taken up the challenge by declaring here. A drawn series doesn't put any more pressure on us. Three Tests in New Zealand gives us a better chance of a positive result in the series and I'm confident that we will win."

Campbell was irritated enough to accept an invitation to select a joint side for the two Tests and reluctantly included five Englishmen. He



On bad terms... captains Allister Campbell and Michael Atherton. PHOTOGRAPH: STU FORSTER

First Man who needs a sting in his tale



Richard Williams

IT TOOK Mike Atherton a long time to live down the few seconds in which he entered the name of **Milan Kundera** on the dotted line marked "Favourite author" in the Cricketers' Who's Who a few years ago.

So it was a little surprising to see him giving another hostage to fortune by volunteering the information, on the eve of England's departure for Zimbabwe, that he had packed **The First Man**, the autobiographical novel on which **Albert Camus**, the well-known goalkeeper, was working when he died.

The First Man? This may, of course, have been in the nature of a wry joke about captains who also open the batting. Or, facing his fourth winter on tour as England's skipper, he may understandably have come over a bit existential.

At any rate he will have been amused by the passage, about a third of the way through the book, when the protagonist — the boy **Jacques Cotner**, Camus's alter ego — sets off for a day's rabbit-hunting with his uncle and a group of friends. "All good fellows," the author reflects, "at least for this occasion, happy to have escaped for a day from the workshop, from small overcrowded apartments, sometimes from their wives too, uninhibited and in a mood of amused tolerance that is peculiar to men when they have got together among themselves for some brief violent pleasure... On these Sundays, Jacques learned that the company of men was good and could nourish the soul."

Just like a cricket tour, really. And at the hope that the company of Atherton's fellow professionals, denied the presence of their partners, has nourished his soul, which must have endured torments beyond his wildest imaginations since he answered England's call in the summer of 1988, halfway through an Ashes series.

From a distance, the latest ordeal has seemed no less confusing and humiliating than every other winter tour this decade. Assuming he survives as captain after the New Zealand leg of the present exz-

tion. Atherton will approach his second home series against Australia — and, in effect, the end of a four-year cycle — without having convinced anyone that English cricket has made any real progress from the state in which **Ted Dexter** and **Graham Gooch** left it.

When Atherton took the job, he was popularly supposed to be a golden boy, risen without apparent effort. In his own mind, however, his career had always been a matter of peaks and troughs. It was three years ago in the Caribbean, on his first tour as captain, that he spoke to me about losing his youthful sense of "invincibility" when he was first laid low by what turned out to be a chronic back problem.

"Up until then I'd always been good physically at whatever I'd done," he said. "I was a good cricketer, and although I'm not saying I was special at other sports, I was always competent, always competitive. I'd win on the golf course, I'd win on the pool table, all that kind of thing. I was fairly confident of my physical abilities. Then the injury came along, and suddenly it could have been the end of my career. That's when the doubts start to come into your mind."

He was still several months away from the dirt-to-the-pocket business, which was when his second ailment — the virtually unanimous approval of fans, officials and fellow players — disintegrated overnight. "It's not many times that an England captain could say that he had full official and public support, with no threat to his job," he said at the time. "That's certainly not the case now, and it's my fault."

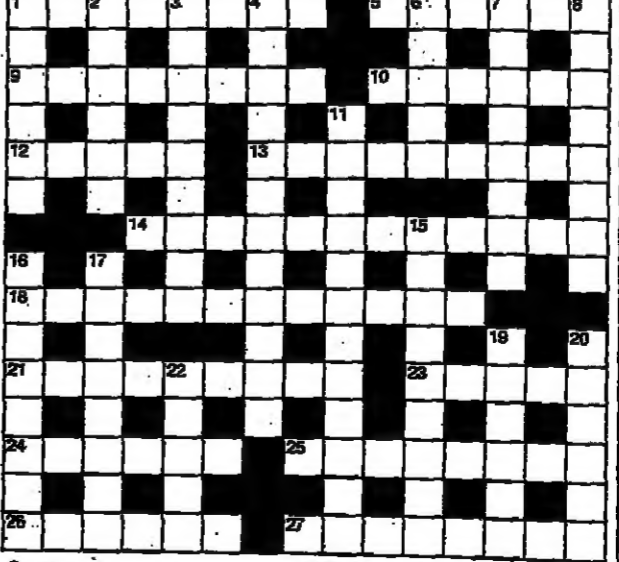
Correctly, he was given the benefit of the doubt. And eventually his obduracy allowed him to see off the meddlesome presence of **Ray Illingworth**. But from today's perspective his tenure seems to have consisted of getting rid of obstructions without erecting any structure substantial in their place.

ATHERTON and **David Lloyd** may have a lot to do, and not a lot of time in which to do it. If they are to convince us of their fitness to lead England out against Australia in the first Test at Edgbaston on June 5.

An isolated victory will not be enough. We have celebrated those before under Atherton, and each turned out to be a false dawn. Now, in New Zealand, we need evidence of real collective progress if the final page of the Atherton saga is not to leave both him and us in mid-air.

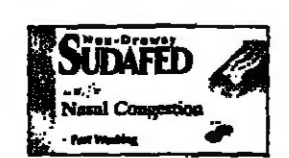
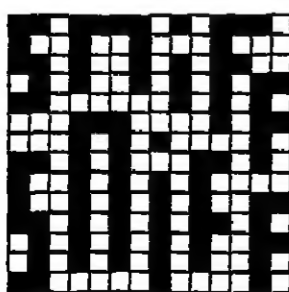
Guardian Crossword No 20,848

Set by Auracaria



- Across**
- 1 Cop-out in the family: it could hold water (8)
 - 5 Publicity about pig going by sea (6)
 - 9 Little time to phone going by road (8)
 - 10 Make a choice by keeping arbitrator (6)
 - 12 Nothing that exists for a group (5)
 - 13 Wrong clue — a hint — it's wrong (9)
 - 14 Group of a lot of cremated ashes? (8,4)
 - 18 Absent without leave, back in the drink, worse than usual? (5,7)
 - 21 Joint problem for non-U king — it exists (6)
 - 22 Difficult? Too bad! (5)
 - 24 I mostly see a quarter of a yard, which is folly (6)
 - 25 Cake and roll, possibly as hot inside (4,4)
 - 26 Victims of a war that diverted the Severn (6)
 - 27 Armaments exhausted around river to the North (8)
- Down**
- 1 Cell the lot for the day (6)
 - 2 Exceeding the right is stupid (6)
 - 3 Bottle opener for Irish prison officer (6)
 - 4 Behaviour with something clinging about it, transmitting power (12)
 - 6 Punishment comes between John and society (5)
 - 7 A catalyst isn't unnatural (8)
 - 8 Ship's boy in backyard with bird's brunette (4,4)
 - 11 Its constituents could be fewer, at least — but they won't be (7,5)

More soccer, page 14



THE UNBLOCKER

But wait, what's this? It's a delicious Cézannewich — still in its commemorative wrapper! A Provençal-style crabstick and goat's dropping triple-decker, left over from that memorable day spent queuing for Cézanne at the Tate.

Adrian Searle

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